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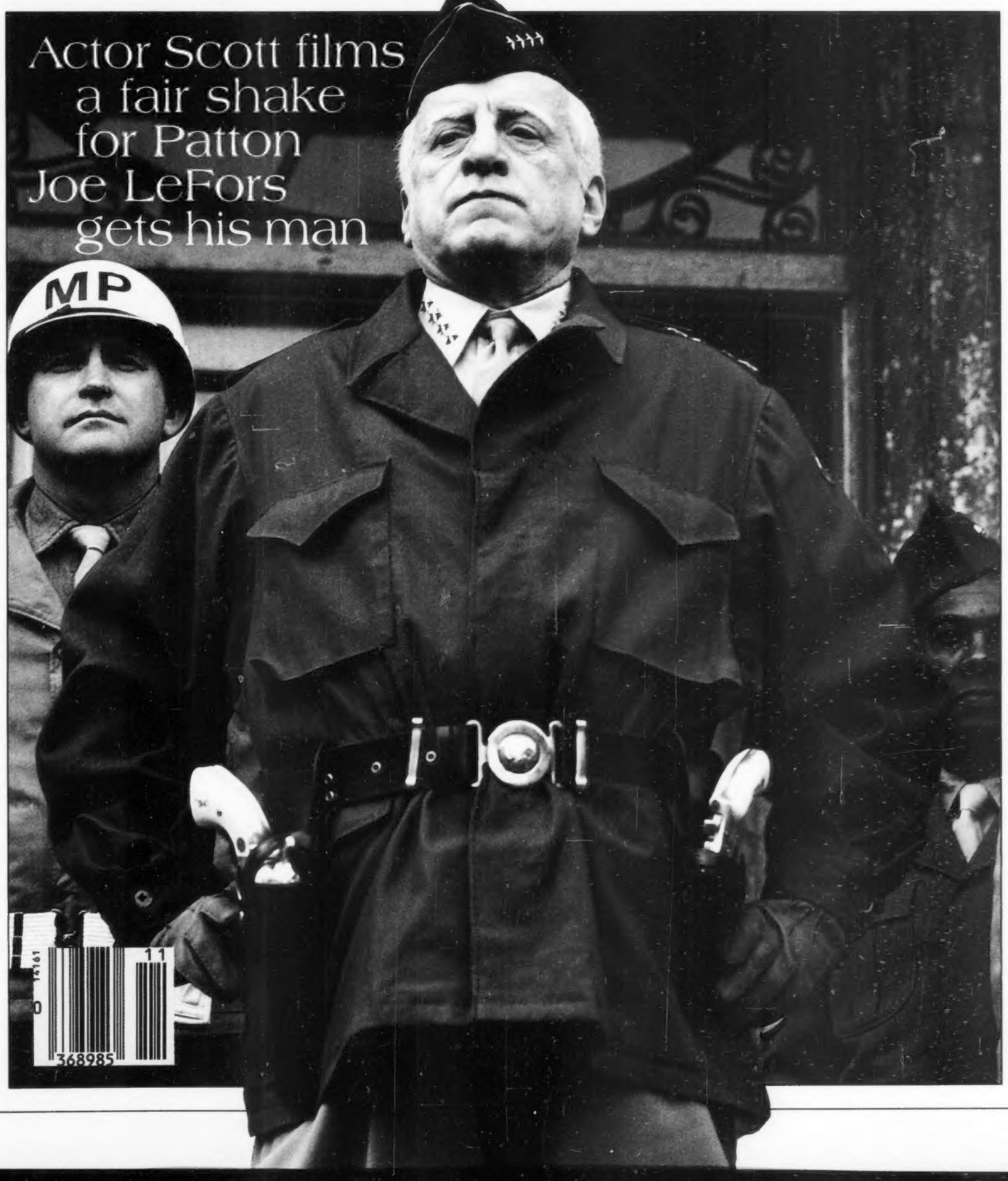
American West

The land and its people

November/December 1985 $3

When Patton went to war in the Mojave



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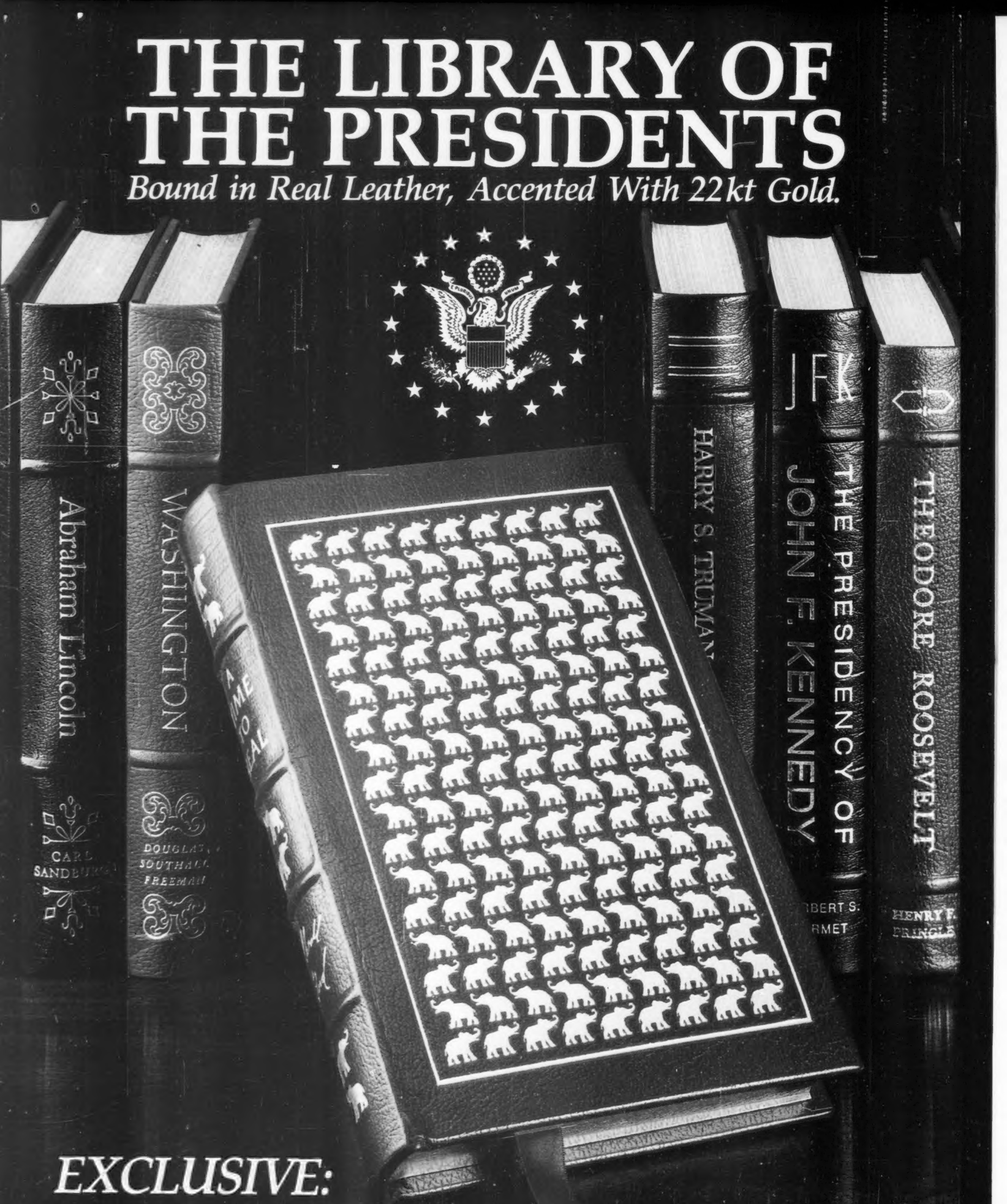

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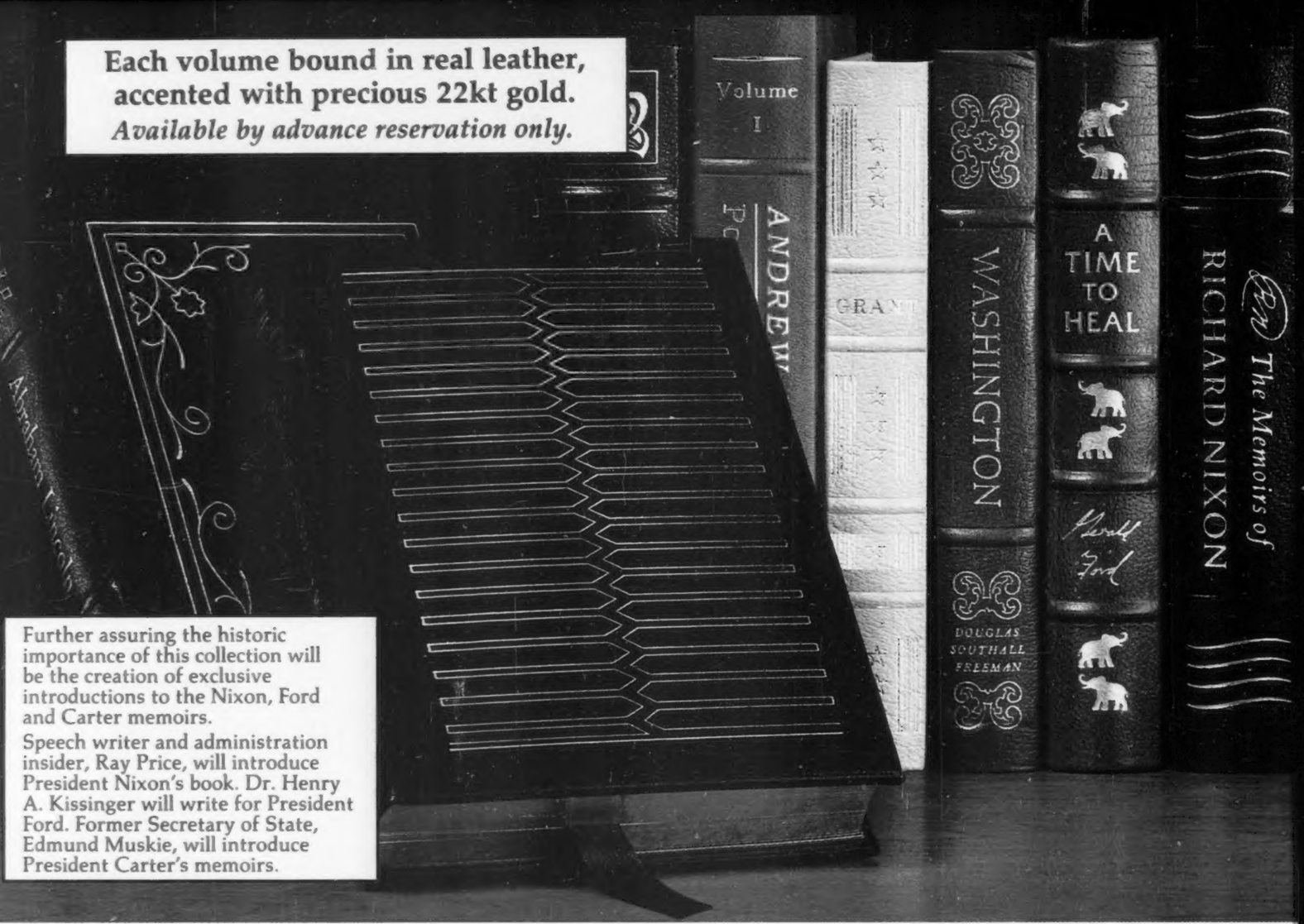

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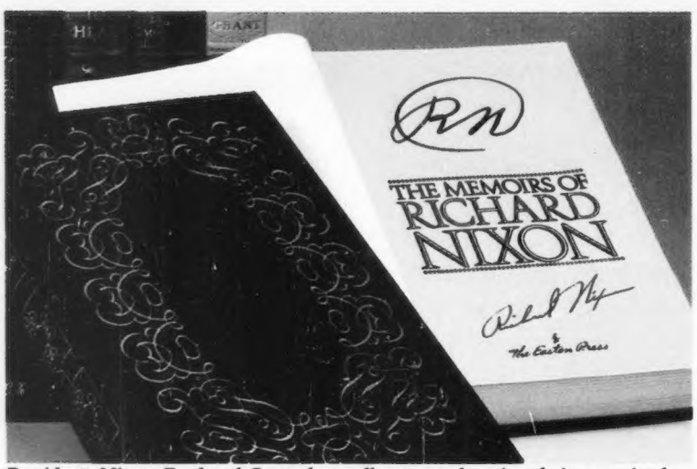

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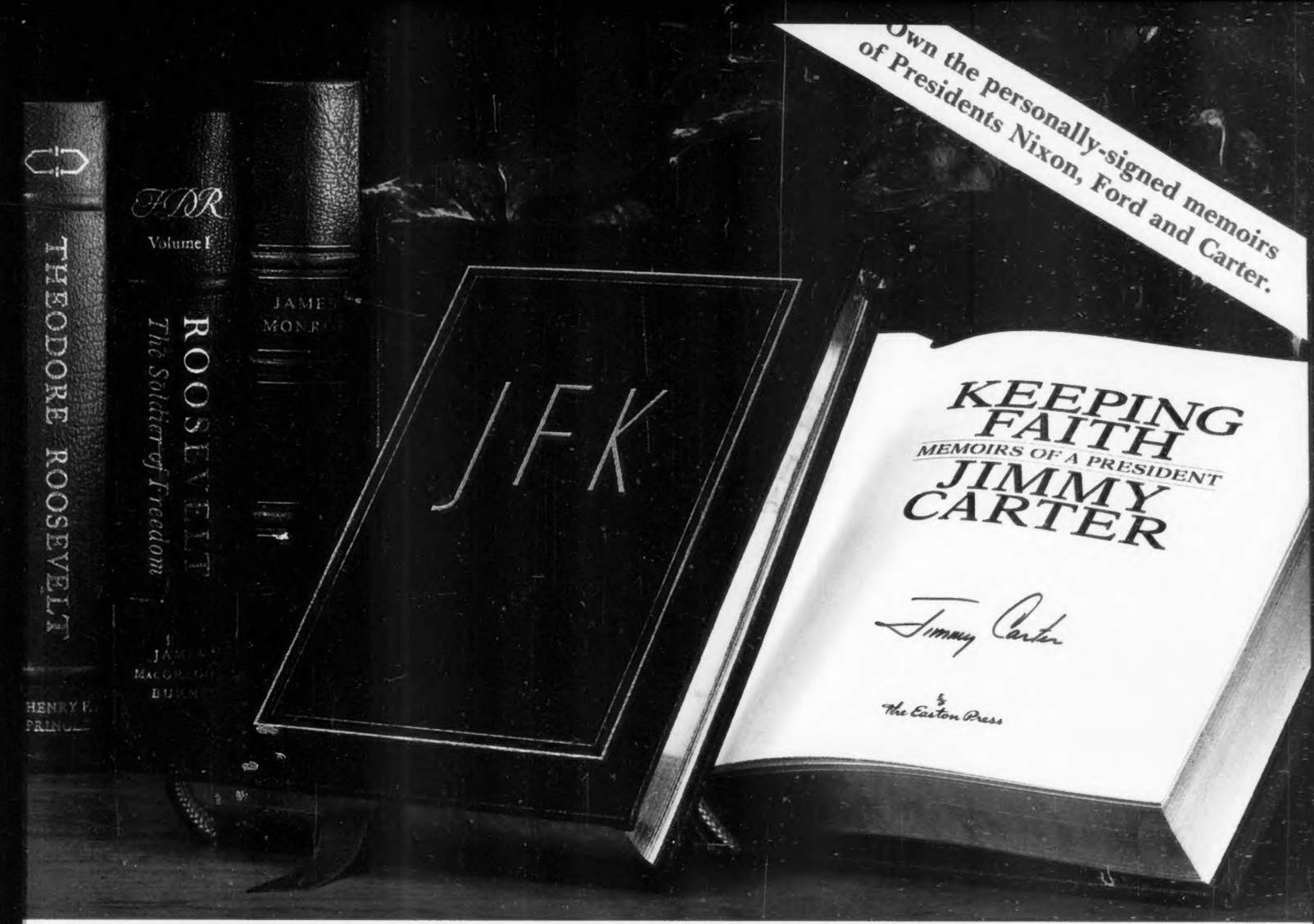

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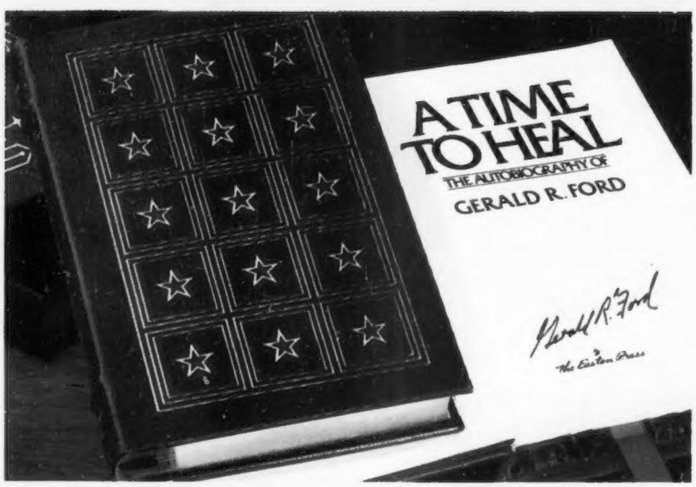

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November/December 1985
Vol. XXII, No. 6

American West

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Cover

Displaying challenging bravado, with arms akimbo and ivory-handled revolvers at the hip, the actor George C. Scott portrays a typical stance of General George S. Patton, Jr. (The general's most famous sidearms were his Colt .45 Peacemaker and his Smith & Wesson .357 Magnum.) The dashing World War II general is remembered with affectionate apprehension by veteran GI's who trained with him at the Desert Training Center in California and Arizona. Come join those veterans as they gather for a reunion at the Center on the fortieth anniversary of VE Day to reminisce about Patton and their time on the Western desert. And learn about "a fair shake" for Patton in a new film based on his last days.

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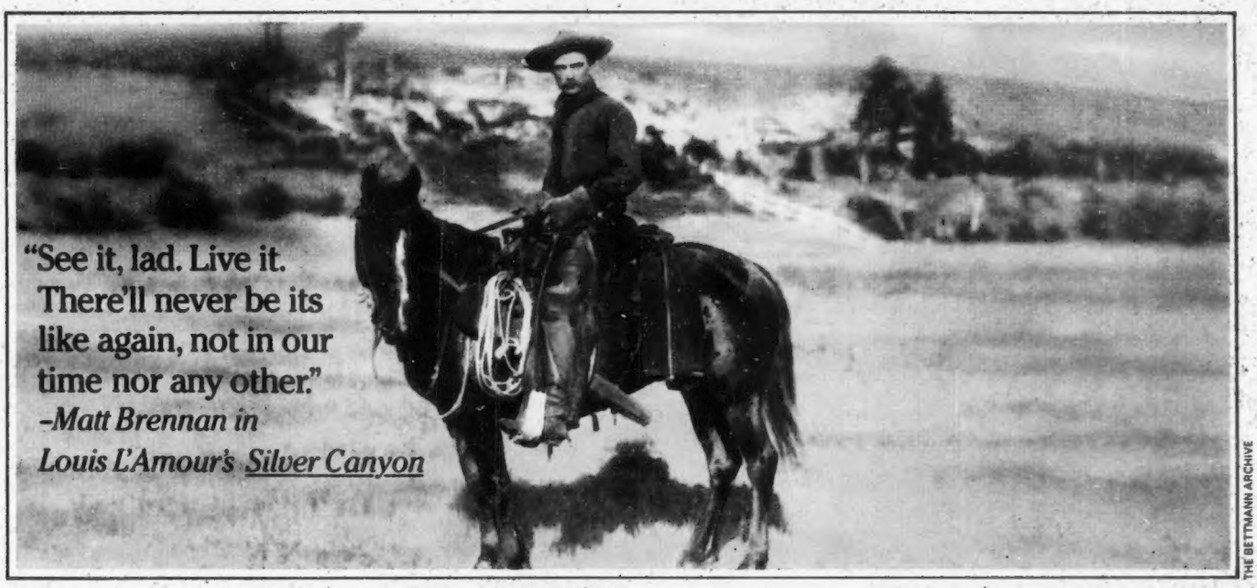
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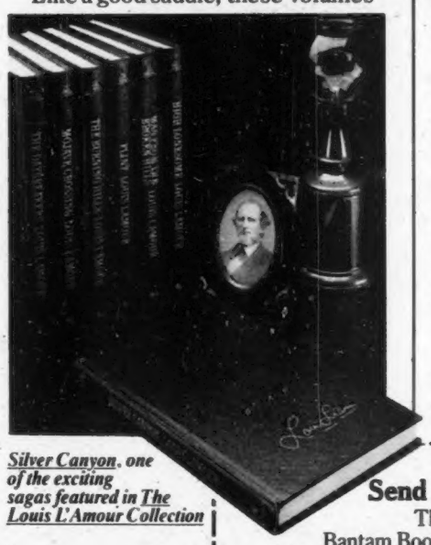

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View from the West

COURTESY JOE DELGADO

An appeaser is one who feeds the crocodile —hoping it will eat him last.
—Winston Churchill

The first explorers who saw it called it the land of the dead. Later, pioneers headed for California avoided its dry wastes, rumored to be littered with the bones of those who had gone before. Even today the modern towns on its edges—Twentynine Palms, Indio, Needles, Blythe—seem desiccated, stark, tenuous.

Still, like other places in the West, the Mojave Desert is a vast natural theater—owing its most powerful impressions to the fearsome qualities that simultaneously attract and repel the visitor. Desert basins filled with exotic Joshua trees, agave, and cactus spread like taut drumheads between distant rings of volcanic mountains that thrust up and stab the sky like rows of barbed wire.

It is a place where the sound of a fly at noon takes on the ominous whine of a lost airplane. Where the wind makes cave-mouth moans blowing by the ear. Where a man walking alone turns around from time to time, haunted by the sensation that someone is there, following just behind.

Only once in its history has the Mojave been filled with men, and the signs of their presence are all but obliterated by the passage of the forty years since they left. The Mojave was the epic-scale stage where General George S. Patton, Jr., chose to gird himself for war. It's the place where he strapped on his most famous wartime stage prop—the six-shooter, symbol for all his men to see. Symbol of the American-style, aggressive, personal war he would wage against Germany.

I went to the Mojave this summer in search of the memory of the man and the million GI's who followed him into the American desert to prepare themselves for war. I left convinced that General George S. Patton, Jr., for all his polo playing and erudite academic understanding of military history, owed more to this harsh Western landscape and its heritage of self-reliance and action than history has ever credited.

Like Gary Cooper in *High Noon* taking on both the outlaws and the foot-dragging, cowering hometown or like Clint Eastwood in this summer's *Pale Rider* stalking into battle outnumbered (and letting the enemy worry about exposed flanks and uneven odds), General Patton left the Mojave training camps and was soon cutting a wartime swath across northern Africa, Sicily, and western Europe and through the collective allied imagination in a fashion that confounded supreme command headquarters even as it consumed the Nazis.

Here was a commander who led his men with all the verve and dash of a Western sheriff (popular among his deputies, if not among his superiors). And here was an enigmatic, cultured warrior who relished the chase. A chase he executed with all the blood-thirsty determination of a territorial bounty hunter, using Sherman tanks instead of horses to ride down and destroy his enemy.

Even in his own camp, among his officer peers, he was more often than not treated like some kind of pariah, renegade—a hired gun, respected, envied (and simultaneously feared) for his skills as a single-minded, unabashed killer of Nazis and a leader of men. The niceties of peacetime don't have room for such men. Patton understood this and like some fairy-tale warrior, poetically wished to die by the last bullet fired in his last battle—not humiliatingly dismissed in peacetime because of an egregious political blunder, and as the result of a neck snapped in the back seat of a jeep in a minor accident.

Near the end of the war when Patton was held back so that General Alexi Antonov's Red Army could take Czechoslovakia (for good as it turned out), Patton blurted out in frustration and anger: "For God's sake, Brad [General Omar Bradley], it seems to me that a great nation like America should let others worry about complications."

As the editors wrapped up this issue of AMERICAN WEST with its stories of Patton, the men who remember him, and the actor whose name is practically synonymous with his, we read in the press that three crew members of the hijacked TWA flight 847 had positively identified the terrorist torturer-killer of Navy diver Robert Dean Stethem. Stethem is the young American sailor whose bludgeoned body was dumped out the rear door of the airplane in Beirut while the world watched. We read that the FBI is aiming to get enough evidence to obtain a federal grand jury indictment against the terrorists.

We couldn't help wonder what the General's reaction might have been. We couldn't help wonder if Americans would be a little less vilified, a little more respected—even in those nations Patton and his fellow soldiers liberated and then rebuilt forty years ago—if we spent a little less time worrying about complications.

Complications in Patton's time might have meant a free Czechoslovakia. Complications today would arise out of world protests over an appropriate American response—like the posting of "Wanted, Dead or Alive" signs under the picture of Stethem's murderer.

It's not a civilized response, but then neither are continuing human sacrifices to the crocodile. The harsh lessons of training in the Mojave, the harsher lessons of war have one unblinkable reality: peace means working for survival before one becomes the last mouthful for the crocodile.

Tom Pew

American Indian life and legends

A Southwestern Christmas

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Among them were the Americans, Jim Bridger, Kit Carson, Tom Fitzpatrick and other soon-to-be famous men, some curious and solitaire, others flamboyant and boisterous, but all engaging in the serious business of Fur Trading.

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Although there was much wild-free activity and spouting camaraderie, most were overwhelmed by the signs that this would surely be the beginning of the end. For, that unique period in history was a time when white men and Indians lived together in peace and harmony, but inevitably would be torn apart by Manifest Destiny.

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CRATER LAKE WITH WIZARD ISLAND

COURTESY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

American Indian Legends, II: The Battle of Llao and Skell

by Stephen L. Harris

Long before the age of modern science, great geologic events typically were explained by myth. In American Indian lore, happenings in the physical world commonly were seen as the consequences of actions performed by mighty beings in the invisible spirit realm. Thus the landslide damming of the Columbia River during prehistoric times, creating the "Bridge of the Gods," was regarded as an act of the Great Spirit (see AMERICAN WEST, July/August 1985). The "bridge's" subsequent destruction was interpreted ethically, as a punishment for the Columbia tribes' misbehavior.

An even more remarkable myth preserves memories of the most far-reaching geologic disaster to occur in the area encompassed by the United States since the Ice Age ended 10,000 years ago. This legend invokes the conflict of two superhuman powers, Llao and Skell, to explain the origin of Crater Lake, an event of such cataclysmic violence that for millennia it remained indelibly impressed on the consciousness of tribes in southern Oregon and northern California. In 1865 an aged Indian named Lalek, Peace Chief of the Klamath tribe, passed on his people's recollection of the battles between Llao and Skell to a young soldier, William M. Colvig, then stationed at Fort Klamath, Oregon. Lalek's tale, originally narrated in the Chinook jargon, is extraordinary not only for the vast length of time that it has been transmitted from generation to generation but also for its grasp of geologic facts then unknown to Caucasians.

Lalek emphasized the extreme antiquity of the catastrophe he described, wryly noting that it occurred long ago when his people lived in rock-built houses and Whitemen ran wild in the woods. It happened before the stars fell, when the spirits of earth, sea, and sky still spoke to human beings. At that time the Chief of the Below World would come up from his dwelling inside the earth and stand atop the high mountain that then towered over southern Oregon. One day the Chief saw Loha, a beautiful young woman, and begged her to return with him to his lodge in the Underworld. Even though he promised her eternal life, the maid refused to go with him.

When the wise men of her people's council would not force the girl to accept Llao, Chief of the Below World, he thundered angrily. Llao resolved to destroy Loha's people with "the curse of fire." But Skell, Chief of the Above World, heard Llao's threat and descended from heaven to the summit of Mount Shasta (over 100 miles to the south of Llao's lofty peak). In the conflict that followed, all the spirits of earth and sky waged war: the sky glowed with sheets of flame, then turned dark as night while the earth heaved convulsively. Torrents of fire flowed from Llao's mountain to burn the forests, reaching even the lodges of Loha's tribe, driving her people to flee into the waters of Klamath Lake.

Praying to the Chief of the Above World to help them, two medicine men determined to save their people from this penalty for their (unspecified) wrongdoing. Carrying brightly burning torches, the two old men slowly climbed the mountain to Llao's fiery mouth, the entrance to the Below World, into which they hurled themselves as living sacrifices. Seeing their brave act, the Chief of the Above World again shook the earth, causing Llao's mountain to crash down upon him. When the dark clouds of ash cleared and light returned, the mountain was gone, a giant hole in its place. The curse of fire was lifted and the great mountain basin gradually filled with rainwater, forming Crater Lake.

Readers familiar with Greek mythology may find in Llao's unrequited passion for Laho a striking parallel to the classical tale about Hades, god of the Underworld, who similarly pursued a reluctant human maid, Persephone, carrying her off to his subterranean kingdom. But the legend's illumination of the geologic record is equally notable. In 1865 when Colvig first heard Lalek's narration, Crater Lake was virtually unknown to Whites and its geologic origin shrouded in mystery. Only with the work of pioneer geologist J.S. Diller (1902) and the classic study of Howel Williams (1942), did the sequence of events leading to the lake's creation become clear. At present Charles R. Bacon, a geologist with the United States Geological Survey, is restudying the formation of Crater Lake, throwing additional light on the story.

An impressive number of geologic facts correspond almost exactly to elements in the Llao-Skell myth. Before about 6,900 years ago, a large volcanic peak, posthumously named Mount Mazama, rose more than a mile above the present level of Crater Lake. After having slept peacefully for 15,000 to 20,000 years, Mount Mazama then awoke, erupting

large volumes of pumice (frothy volcanic glass) and a series of thick lava flows along its northern flank. The climactic "curse of fire" quickly followed this preliminary activity: Mazama exploded with cataclysmic violence, hurling columns of ash twenty miles or more into the stratosphere, blanketing over 500,000 square miles of western North America with whitish ash. Then the mountain literally boiled over. Dozens of new vents opened, spewing forth enormous quantities of incandescent pumice. These gas-charged masses of volcanic froth poured like "rivers of fire" down all sides of the volcano, incinerating everything in their path and traveling up to forty miles or more from their source. Some of these pyroclastic flows reached into Klamath Marsh, from which floating rafts of pumice eventually were washed down into the Klamath Lakes. No wonder Lalek's ancestors sought refuge in the cool lake waters!

After Llao's mountain had thundered its last and the volcanic dust began to clear, the native survivors discovered that the great mountain had disappeared. In its place was an enormous collapsed depression—a caldera—five by six miles in diameter and up to 4,000 feet deep. This basin slowly filled with water, forming the bluest and deepest lake (1,932 feet) in North America.

What had become of Mount Mazama? As the legend correctly indicates, the volcano did not blow itself apart but collapsed inward. So huge a volume of molten rock—up to forty-two cubic miles—had been rapidly expelled from Mazama's underground magma reservoir that support was removed from the volcano's former summit, allowing it to subside with a crash that must have been heard for hundreds of miles in every direction.

And what of Skell's role in this debacle? As Llao's peak was an opening to the fiery underworld, so Skell's mountain, Mount Shasta, was a pedestal to which the sky god descended from heaven. When the god was in residence, Shasta, too, breathed "fire." C. Dan Miller, also of the U.S. Geological Survey, found that Mount Shasta is one of the most frequently active volcanos in the West, building its present summit cone (elevation 14,161 feet) during the last several thousand years. Shasta has remained active into historic time and represents one of California's principal volcanic hazards.

The Klamath legend was also correct in stating that Llao's curse was lifted. Although activity continued inside the caldera after Mazama's destruction, erecting several cones now submerged beneath the lake water—as well as conical Wizard Island (which some say embodies the maid whom Llao loved)—the volcano seems to have been quiet for about 6,000 years. Today's visitors to Crater Lake can see a natural monument to the old Chief of the Below World—Llao Rock, a 1,200-foot-thick lava flow perched on the northwest rim of the caldera. Skell, who defeated and decapitated his adversary, is honored in Skell Channel, the narrow waterway that separates Wizard Island from the west caldera wall. As geologists know, both Llao and Skell are only temporarily dozing; the gods of earth and sky might awaken them at any time.

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A professor of Humanities at California State University, Sacramento, **Stephen L. Harris** *is currently writing a book on aspects of Western geology.*

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Western Lookout

COURTESY EARTHWATCH. PHOTO BY DONALD BLAKESLEE

Finding the Yellow Star

Archeologists believe they have found the earliest Plains Indian astronomical observatories, dating from circa A.D. 1300. Anthropologists have long known that the ancestral Pawnee revered four stars of direction—northwest, southwest, northeast, and southeast. Recently, workers in a Plains Prehistory Project of EARTHWATCH discovered what Mark Cherrington, associate editor of EARTHWATCH publications, calls "the first hard evidence" pinpointing one of these four stars.

While excavating several earth lodges on the South Dakota side of the Missouri River brakes about forty miles northwest of Sioux City, Iowa, Donald Blakeslee noted one lodge with several unusual characteristics. Although the long entranceways to these dwellings almost invariably face east of south, this lodge entrance faces northeast. And the sunken pit commonly found to the right or left of the entrance is situated right in the center of the back wall, permitting a narrow view out the thirty-foot length of the entrance to the outside. The bulk of the doorway is blocked by the only hill, and not a large one at that, on that side of the river for miles around. Curiosity aroused, Blakeslee—an anthropologist at Wichita State University—checked astronomical projections for the period. He found that the star we call Capella would have risen over that hill just before dawn for a brief moment before the sun obscured its light, an event called a heliacal rising. Just once a year that star would make its appearance in the narrow 2½° field of view from the pit. According to Blakeslee, the heliacal rising of Capella —the "Yellow Star" of the northwest to the ancestors of the Pawnee—would have been used to realign the tribe's working lunar calendar with the finer solar calendar. About twenty miles from the EARTHWATCH project, Blakeslee later investigated a lodge that had been excavated in 1933, whose southeast-facing entranceway also looked toward a small hill. From this lodge, the ancient Pawnee could see the heliacal rising of the star Rigel, "White Star," or star of the southwest.

Buffaloburgers, coming up! A growing number of U.S. citizens are finding that American buffalo make good tax shelters. Although buffalo depreciate on about the same schedule as cattle, they are actually sturdier and can breed for many more years (between twenty-five and forty years of bearing calves is not unusual for a bison cow). Raising buffalo looks increasingly lucrative when one discovers that the buffalo herd also needs less attention, is more resistant to disease, and withstands cold winters better than cattle. Selling the hide and meat from extra bulls and nonproducing cows, and sometimes sell-

ing a mounted head, an investor can realize a profit of $2,000 or more per buffalo according to Judi Hebbring, executive director of the National Buffalo Association in Custer, South Dakota. She estimates that there are close to a thousand buffalo keepers in the United States. Private herds are kept everywhere from Hawaii to Massachusetts, accounting for over eighty percent of the estimated 80,000 head in this country today.

Recent studies indicate that buffalo, as Charles Goodnight professed in the late 1800s, actually is good for one's health. Pound for pound, buffalo meat is higher in protein and polyunsaturated fats and lower in cholesterol and calories than beef. In fact, Hebbring informs us, Weight Watchers has accepted buffalo meat as a "neutral food," in the same category as fish and poultry. We understand that Tommy's Joynt on Van Ness Avenue in San Francisco has long offered buffalo stew on their menu.

The National Buffalo Association encourages the commercial marketing of buffalo meat. Some people object to eating buffalo because they mistakenly believe that the American buffalo is still an endangered species. But these massive creatures are no longer on the brink of extinction, as they were at the turn of the century, and those who raise bison for market are responsible for most of the recent rise in their numbers, since the population of federal and state herds cannot grow within the set acreage of the parks that hold them. As a matter of fact, Custer State Park—which has the world's largest herd of publicly owned buffalo—maintains a manageable herd-size by annually culling ten-year-olds. These relative youngsters are sold at auction on the third Saturday in November to breeders, commercial distributors, and buffalo enthusiasts. (For more information call 605-225-4515.) Don't be surprised if you find buffaloburger in your local supermarket within the next few years.

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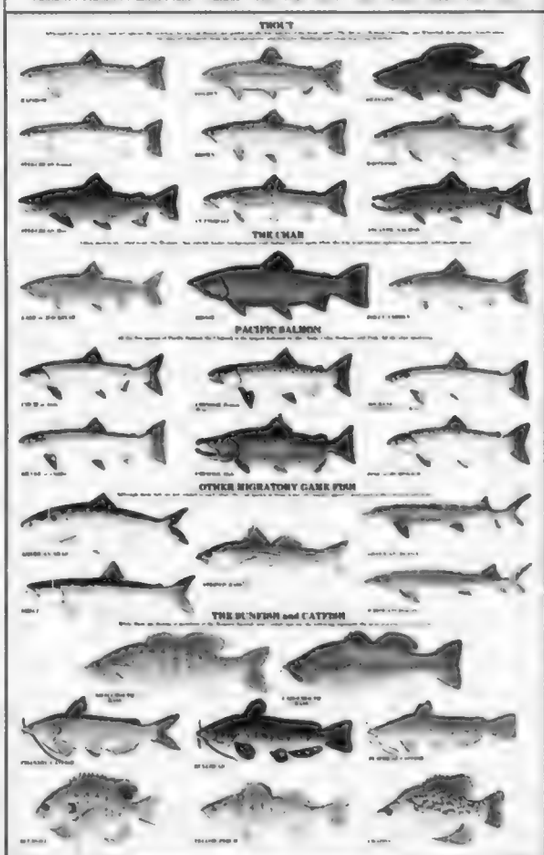

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DRAWN FOR AMERICAN WEST BY VAKA PEREYMA

Dinosaurs galore. In the Petrified National Forest of northern Arizona, Dr. Robert Long of the University of California at Berkeley and his colleagues have recently unearthed "Gertie," the oldest dated dinosaur skeleton yet. Estimated to have lived 225 million years ago, Gertie is of a previously unidentified genus distantly related, perhaps, to the well-known brontosaur.

In Texas, teams from Southern Methodist University, Tarleton State University, and the University of Colorado have dug out several camptosaurlike creatures in a fossil-rich area near Proctor Lake. Several skeletons, measuring three to ten feet long and about waist high to an average man, have been carefully extricated from a 100-million-year-old geological stratum. An abundance of bones there makes this discovery especially important. Though fossils before and after this period are not uncommon, very few fossils from the midcretaceous period have been found. Will Downs, a researcher with Southern Methodist University as well as Northern Arizona University, explains that the team hopes to find the bones of small animals at the Proctor Lake dig. In both Arizona and Texas, researchers are attempting to reconstruct the whole paleo-eco system, searching for a greater understanding of the evolution of life on earth.

With increased interest during the last twenty years or so, the number of digs has risen, and a previously unimagined variety of dinosaurean "architecture" has been unearthed.

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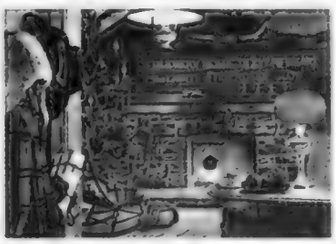
2333 "A Cowboy's Christmas Prayer" (14 line cowboy poem by S. Omar Barker inside) Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year—*artist Tim Cox*



1481 ...In every home...the lights of friendship glow... it's time to greet the friends it's nice to know. Merry Christmas!—*artist Nicles*

2363 THREE KINGS May the meaning of the Season be deeper, its friendships stronger...hopes brighter as Christmas comes to you...—*artist Cummings*

1657 CHRISTMAS EVE IN A MANGER May the blessings of Christmas be with you today and always—*artist Hildred Goodwine*

2022 Greetings... May you have the Spirit of Christmas which is Peace...the Heart of Christmas which is Love—*artist Ted Blaylock*

1674 Merry Christmas WHOA, HOSS, WHOA ...and best wishes for a Happy New Year from Our Outfit to Yours—*artist Vic Donahue*

2051 ...May your blessings be more than you've ever hoped for... Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year —*artist Lee K. Parkinson*

2276 May Christmas bring Friends to your Fireside, and Peace... Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year—*Chris Cummings*

2285 Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year—*artist Hildred Goodwine*

Two things upon this changing earth
Can neither change nor end.
The splendor of Christ's humble birth,
The love of friend for friend.

2309 The splendor of Christ's humble birth, the love of friend for friend. Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year—*artist C. Smith*

2331 Silent night! Holy night!... May Peace be your Gift at Christmas and your Treasure through all the Year —*artist Marianne Caroselli*

3253 "TAKE TIME TO SEE" (inspirational nature poem inside) Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year—*artist Ted Blaylock*

2392 To those we love and see each day and other loved ones far away... Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!—*artist Lee K. Parkinson*

4192 "Glory to God in the highest..." May the Peace and Joy of Christmas be with you through all the Year—*photo by Fletcher Manley*

1602 CHRISTMAS WISHES COME TRUE Merry Christmas and best wishes for a Happy New Year —*artist Hildred Goodwine*

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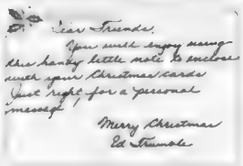


1142 Never too cold for kindness, never too deep the snow, to wish you the Merriest Christmas our good Lord can bestow!—*artist Bernard Thomas*

2087 RUNNING WITH THE WIND Wishing you a Blessed Christmas and Happiness throughout the New Year —*artist Vel Miller*

1822 Christmas Greetings Wishing you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year—*artist Charles M. Russell*

2033 May Christmas bring Friends to your Fireside, Peace to your Pathway, and Good Health throughout the New Year—*artist Russ Vickers*

2259 To those we love and see each day and other loved ones far away... Merry Christmas and Happy New Year—*artist J.W. Claflin*

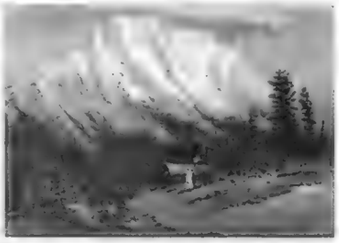
1462 "Peace on Earth" May Peace be your Gift at Christmas, and your Treasure through all the Year —*artist Brummett EchoHawk*

2407 KEEPING CHRISTMAS WATCH... A HERDBOY AND HIS FLUTE. May the Peace...of Christmas be with you...—*artist EchoHawk*

2275 Thinking of you... With every good wish for a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year —*artist Chris Cummings*

2377 "Christmas Thanks" (14 line inspirational poem by S. Omar Barker inside) Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year—*artist Gary Niblett*

2375 THE CHRISTMAS PONY This brings a prayer...that God will always bless...you and those you love...with lasting happiness...—*artist M. Caroselli*



2328 May you have the Spirit of Christmas which is Peace...Gladness which is Hope, the Heart of Christmas which is Love—*artist Ted Blaylock*

3309 "They walk with God upon the hills..." Wishing you a Blessed Christmas and Happiness throughout the New Year—*artist Dorrine Robertson*

2173 Times change...but not ...friendship. Let us keep Christmas...the warmth and joy of remembering friends.—*artist Claflin*

2330 To those we love and see each day and other loved ones far away... Merry Christmas and Happy New Year! —*artist Carl J. Smith*

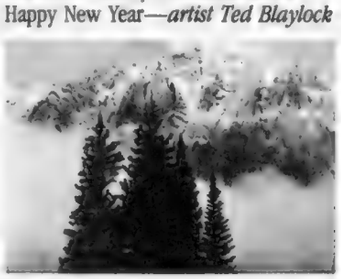
2371 There is a quiet in the desert land... May you have the Spirit of Christmas which is Peace...the Heart of Christmas which is Love—*artist Snow*

2310 We've packed up and moved. ...But our wish is a tried 'n' true one... Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year—*artist Ted Blaylock*

2298 "A Cowboy's Prayer" (poem by Badger Clark inside) Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year —*artist Bill Moyers*

2397 Times change...but not... friendship. Let us keep Christmas close to our hearts... the warmth and joy of friends.—*artist Harold Lyon*

3330 In the heart of the wilderness Christmas has come...Glory to God in the highest... Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year—*artist Ted Blaylock*



7017 Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year—*photo by David Sumner*

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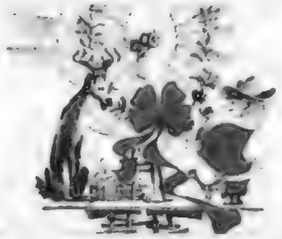
1656 SILENT NIGHT...ALL IS CALM, ALL IS BRIGHT May Peace be your Gift at Christmas...your Treasure...all the Year—*artist Hildred Goodwine*

2382 "Joy is the Spirit..." May the Peace and Happiness of the Christmas Season abide with you through all the Coming Year —*artist J.W. Claflin*



2374 It's Christmas again! May yours be a joyful one and your New Year happy!—*artist Richard Barth*

2372 ...one feels close to the Creator... Wishing you a Blessed Christmas and Happiness throughout the New Year—*artist Lex Gonzalez Jr.*

2398 May Christmas bring Friends to your Fireside, Peace to your Pathway, and Good Health throughout the New Year—*artist Robert Wagoner*

3314 "TAKE TIME TO SEE" (inspirational nature poem inside) May Peace be your gift at Christmas...and your treasure—*artist Jodie Boren*

2389 May Christmas bring Friends to your Fireside, Peace to your Pathway and Good Health throughout the New Year—*artist James Boren*

May the road rise up to meet you,
may the wind be always at your back,
may the sun shine warm upon your face,
the snow fall soft on the plains around you
and until we meet again...
may God hold you in the hollow of His hand.

1304 **...May God hold you in the hollow of His hand.** Merry Christmas and Best Wishes for a Happy New Year—*artist Gordon Snidow*

2388 In every home, in every heart, the lights of friendship glow... Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year —*artist Ted Blaylock*

2346 **Greetings...from our outfit to yours** May there come to you...the precious things of life: Health, Happiness...Friendships—*artist Crooks*

3252 Never a Christmas...but someone thinks of...old friends. Merry Christmas and Best Wishes for a Happy New Year—*artist George Wise*

Roof's still leakin'. Water in the crick.
Wolf at the door a-growlin' fierce.
Ol' cow gone dry. Both horses lame.
But Merry Christmas just the same!

2339 **Roof's still leakin'... but Merry Christmas just the same!** May yours be a joyful one and your New Year happy!—*artist Ted Blaylock*

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1602	2087	2310	2363	2389	3314
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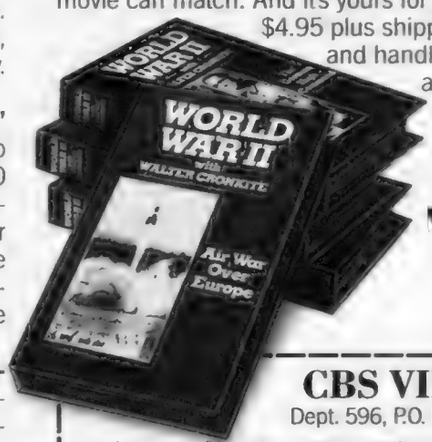

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AP WIDE WORLD PHOTO

ON THE WAY TO WAR

With Patton and GI's on the Western desert

by Thomas W. Pew, Jr.

Now I want you to remember that no bastard ever won a war by dying for his country. You won it by making the other poor dumb bastard die for his country.

—General George S. Patton, somewhere in England, June 5, 1944

COURTESY BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

In the parched country straddling the border between California and Arizona, American GI's began training for desert warfare in the spring of 1942. The Desert Training Center was conceived a few months after Pearl Harbor by a mastermind in tank strategy, General George S. Patton, Jr., who drove his men with all the zeal of a determined martinet. His clinched fists reflecting his dogged resolve, Patton is shown addressing his new command two years later in the European theatre of operations. Pictured in the Desert Training Center, the crews of two Sherman tanks maneuver in simulated combat.

FORTY YEARS HAD PASSED, AND THEY CAME TO STAND under the summer sun and remember. To stand where once they had rumbled across the Mojave Desert in tanks, jeeps, and half-tracks. To stand and listen to speeches delivered by assistants to their congressmen—important people too busy to attend themselves, much less remember that this barren Western desert is where the United States began winning World War II. And a place where many GI's got their first startled taste of a larger-than-life commander who possessed a unique ability to inspire his men, infuriate his superiors, and intimidate everyone else—especially the German high command.

Not until Porter Williamson began by confessing that even after forty years he still felt uneasy about standing in the shade in that desert, did the veterans know they were listening to one of their own. "Why if General Patton could look down from wherever he is and see me standing here in the shade, while troops were out in the sun," Williamson said to a round of laughter, "he'd have my hide for sure. We all stood in the sun then," he reminded them with a reference to the commander who pushed his men with an iron fist—an officer "who looked like a general, but talked like a top kick," with a blue-streak in his tongue that matched the curses of the toughest boys in the ranks.

Several hundred GI's who trained for the war in the deserts of California, Arizona, and Nevada and later served under General George S. Patton, Jr., in North Africa, Sicily, and Europe assembled for one last time in the middle of the Mojave Desert this past summer. They came to Chiriaco Summit (Camp Young) near Indio, California, to celebrate V-E Day and to commemorate with a permanent historical marker the training camps established by a commander who went to war with all the religious zealotry of an early Christian Crusader. Then, when the speeches were done, to swap memories of training for and fighting a war that General Patton assured them (with numerous four-letter expletives) they'd one day be proud to "put our grandchildren on our knees and tell them how we did it!" Even Harry Kies, a post-war naturalized German-American who served with the Eighth Panzer Regiment under Rommel and spent most of the war in stateside POW camps in McLean, Texas, Roswell, New Mexico, and two midwestern states, came to the Desert Center ceremonies to meet "some of you guys I fought against."

Gathered together for one final time were men of the Third, Fourth, Sixth, and Seventh Armored Divisions; the Fourth, Thirty-third, and Ninety-fifth Infantry Divisions; several independent units that included Field Artillery, Engineers, Tank Destroyers, and Cavalry. To hear the stories told today, the grim business of preparing for war was alleviated with an endless supply of practical jokes and tricks played on one another, even by (but never on) the fearsome general himself. Porter Williamson, who served on Patton's staff in the desert at the beginning, recalled a time when Patton made surprise inspections of night guards during simulated combat-alert

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"We were driving towards our own camp outside of the perimeter when we saw one of the outer guards, and General Patton asked me to make sure he knew his assignment," Williamson remembered. After the guard properly challenged Williamson, pointing his rifle directly at the lieutenant's chest until the passwords were exchanged, Williamson questioned him about his orders, while Patton remained out of sight in the dark.

"From which direction do you expect trouble?" Williamson queried. When the guard pointed to the center of the camp, Williamson proceeded to dress him down angrily, knowing full well that the general had overheard the guard's error. An error that would mean friendly fire directed at the soldier's own headquarters in combat. "That's the center of our camp," Williamson said with disgust. "The enemy would be in the opposite direction."

THE GUARD STARED BACK AT HIM POKER-FACED, AND without blinking replied: "You didn't ask me anything about the enemy, sir. I know where the enemy is. You asked me where I expected trouble, and I expect trouble from right back there. That's Patton's headquarters, and *that's* where I expect trouble."

Williamson, now painfully aware that the general was sitting in the open command car just yards away overhearing every word of this, and as a member of the general's immediate staff equally aware of Patton's unpredictable, violent temper, stared back at the soldier in disbelief. But before he could reply, out of the desert dark he heard Patton laughing and calling out: "Come on back, Williamson. That man understands his mission."

Equally surprised at this disembodied command out of the dark, the guard gave Porter a quizzical look and asked, "Who's that?" When he heard the general's name he exclaimed, "My God, you gotta expect Patton from all directions."

Williamson recalls today that when he climbed back into the car, Patton was still chuckling and remarked: "We are doing better! We are up to the training of the Roman legions!" It wasn't until years later, Porter admits, when he read Gibbon's *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, that he finally understood what Patton meant that night in 1942. As a man who was equally at home with the phalanxes of ancient Greece and the legions of Rome as well as the columns of Napoleon and the mass armies of World War I, and who applied all of the lessons of warfare from all military history, Patton believed in the maxim of inflexible Roman military discipline, that a good soldier should dread his officers far more than the enemy.

Accommodations at the desert center were pyramidal tents. Besides beds, sparse furnishings included footlockers, musette bags, and desert rats.

COURTESY BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

STATUE OF GENERAL PATTON COURTESY W. CONNORS, ICELANDAIR

Remembrance Day in Ettelbruck

General George S. Patton, Jr., is a national hero to the citizens of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg. To express affectionate gratitude for liberation from Nazi occupation by Patton and the United States Third Army in 1944, inhabitants of the little town of Ettelbruck in Luxembourg have celebrated Remembrance Day each summer for over thirty years. Usually held on the last Sunday in June, ceremonies take place in Patton Park on the edge of town, where a nine-foot, bronze statue of the general in combat garb looks out over the valley. Nearby is one of the Sherman tanks that rolled into Ettelbruck with American forces in 1944, kept in apple-pie order by the townspeople. At the far end of the mini-park a twenty-five-foot obelisk, surmounted by the defiant figure of an American eagle, is inscribed with the names of the units of the Third Army that fought in Luxembourg to free the Duchy in the summer of 1944 and then to protect it from re-invasion by the Nazis at the end of that year in the historic Battle of the Bulge. Embedded in a rock wall near the obelisk is a plaque (placed there by the son of General Patton on Remembrance Day in 1977) with a diagram of the battle zones in Luxembourg during World War II.

With thousands of spectators in town, civilian and military representatives of Luxembourg and the United States hold ceremonies in Patton Park that reflect the appreciation of Luxembourgers for the heroism of American soldiers and the generosity of the United States in rebuilding the Luxembourg economy after peace came. At the close of emotional proceedings, the local band plays the national anthems of the United States and of Luxembourg, while U.S. jet planes from a nearby base fly over in low passes.

The military parade that follows takes on the festive air that pervades the town. Because Ettelbruck has always singled out Patton as its especial hero, it is known as "Patton Town." The streets are decked out in American flags, homes are decorated with red, white, and blue bunting, photographs of Patton appear in many windows, and the local Patton Museum has its busiest day of the year. Festivities continue into the night, with most of the town gathering in the soccer stadium to enjoy band concerts and military drills. On this day many Luxembourgers travel to Hamm, a village near Luxembourg City, where a U.S. military cemetery holds the bodies of over 5,000 American soldiers, including that of General Patton, who died in 1945 after complications following an automobile accident.

Information about Remembrance Day in Ettelbruck and travel to the battlefields of the Bulge may be obtained from Icelandair, 630 Fifth Avenue, New York, New York 10111.

The story also illustrates another basic Patton tenet. Whether he was testing troops in the Mojave or going after the Germans in the desert of Tunisia, Patton always wanted to be where he was least expected, preferably moving swiftly and undetected behind enemy lines until he was ready to strike. As he put it, in his unique vernacular, the trick is: "Catch the enemy by the nose with fire and kick him in the pants with fire emplaced through movement. . . . The enemy's rear is the happy hunting ground for armor. Use every means to get it there."

Patton was a tough taskmaster among his troops and he was not above tweaking the noses of his officers. Walter Hennessey (known as "Three Star" to his friends) spent four years fighting overseas as a tank driver and a machine gunner with the 757th Tank Battalion. He recalls that the officers were awed by Patton far more than the men, "who weren't bucking for anything."

> One day when we were practicing decontaminating our tank, a procedure we had to learn in case of gas attack (Hennessey remembers), out of nowhere pops the general, salutes the lieutenant in charge of the platoon, jumps up on the tank, and talks to Sergeant Rucker. He questions him about what he is doing and why. There are now about five company and battalion officers at the foot of the tank, including our colonel. When Sergeant

Rucker explains what he is doing, General Patton shakes his hand and whispers something into his ear. He jumps off the tank, salutes the assembled officers, and doesn't say a word to them as he gets in his car and is driven away.

The minute Sergeant Rucker gets off the tank, of course, the officers want to know what General Patton whispered in his ear. Sergeant Rucker says, "What General Patton whispered in my ear was: 'The minute you get off the tank, Sergeant, those dizzy bastards will want to know what I whispered into your ear.' "

Sergeant Charles Jeglinski, who trained in the Mojave and joined Patton's army after D-Day in Europe, did double duty in the Mojave. Looking across the flats near the temporary reviewing stand, he can still see 1,700 1942-tanks in one sweeping maneuver crossing the desert, stirring up a man-made dust storm. "That was something to see," he recalls with an infectious excitement for the ghost tank corps rumbling through his memory. Then gazing across the great Mojave Caldera towards the Chocolate Mountains, he adds, "It was also something the night the first big wind came up and swept all our tents away, leaving us scrambling around in the dark in a desert windstorm in nothing but our skivvies." On maneuvers away from camp, he recalled, when they didn't even use tents, they slept with ropes around their sleeping bags to keep the rattlers away, and every morning before putting on their boots, shook out the scorpions.

SERGEANT JEGLINSKI WAS CALLED BACK INTO THE Army during the Korean War, and shipped right back to the Desert Training Center to help train a new generation of soldiers for that war.

I'd already retired from a career in the Army (Jeglinski recalls today), and the first thing I know they come after me in 1951 and say: "Jeglinski, we need you. We need someone who's been out there in the desert and knows it, and can train these guys." At first I told them, "Like hell, I did my time." But after they agreed I could sign up on my own terms and get out again when I wanted, I agreed. You know, once I'd been out on the desert in 1942, I never forgot it. It gets to you. In a way you never want to leave. Truth is I was glad to be back.

Jeglinski remembers the Korean War days as like living his earlier life over again, except the second time he was dishing up the training, and afterwards he didn't have to do the fighting.

General Patton selected the remote Mojave for training troops because war-scale maneuvers and mock battles could be conducted there without encountering civilians. The original

Crews learned to handle 90 mm antiaircraft guns at the Desert Training Center. The disadvantage of this type of field artillery was the time necessary to bring it in where needed and the hour to set it up.

COURTESY BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

World War II training area covered some 18,000 square miles. It extended from near Boulder City, Nevada, on the north, south to the Mexican border, east to Phoenix, Arizona, and west to Pomona, California. It had all the hardships of weather and terrain that a general, who thought like a Roman legionary, wanted to harden men and equipment for the real thing. He believed that leading untrained men into battle was a crime. At the end of the war a survey of Patton's Third Army battle statistics showed that the Third Army caused the enemy 1,443,888 casualties, of whom 47,500 had been killed and 1,280,688 taken prisoner. In the same period Patton's men had 160,692 casualties, of whom 27,104 had been killed. In other words, the Patton army inflicted about ten casualties for each one they received, making the general good on his tough guarantee that to win a war you "had to make the other poor bastard die for his country." Thousands of Germans surrendered when they knew they were facing Patton's Third Army. To surrender to Patton's men, it was said, was not so great a dishonor as to surrender to any other unit.

It all began according to the general's plan in the Mojave where temperatures climbed to 120° in the shade and up to 152° inside some of the tanks. ("Three Star" Hennessey wrote home to his Mother on June 24, 1942, that it hit 185° inside his tank during maneuvers that month.) The troops remember the open-top, turreted tank destroyers as being the hottest. Inspection of tools and equipment was made early in the morning or late in the evening as any equipment or tools laid out on tarps beside individual vehicles, in the desert sun, could not be picked up without serious burns. Even climbing in and out of the tanks at midday required wearing heavy gloves. Water in the Lister bags sometimes reached 90° but after climbing out of a 150° tank, GI's found even 90° water cool. By the Colorado Aqueduct that skirted some of the desert camps, there were showers that could wash the dust off 500 men at once. It wasn't unusual for soldiers to take showers in their fatigues; by the time they walked to the mess tent, they were dry. Ev Hayes, Area Manager for the U.S. Bureau of Land Management at Needles, California, a man dedicated to preserving what's left of the training camps today, has calculated that more than one million young Americans were trained in the Mojave Desert camps from February 1942 through June 1944. That number included at least twenty-three of the more than eighty-five army divisions fielded in World War II. Also included in the total were elements of the Army Air Force, as well as numerous support units.

But as for the desert being entirely devoid of civilians during the training years, Sergeant Joe Delgado and other soldiers who gathered after the ceremony recalled a mock battle, with tens of thousands of rounds of live ammunition that failed to take into account one civilian. The battle of Pelen Pass was a training exercise put on near Desert Center for the benefit of forty-eight State Governors. "We threw everything we had at

that pass in the mountains across the valley," Delgado remembers, shading his eyes and pointing off at an arid gap in the mountains.

> First came the airplanes and strafed hell out of it. Then the artillery shells began to cover the ground, next came tanks rumbling into the pass blasting away and finally streams of troops. There was so much dust and smoke up there you wouldn't think anything could be alive for miles. But when we stopped, and the smoke began to clear, someone shouted, "Hey look up there, what's that moving?" And just like nothing at all had been going on, this old dusty prospector and his burro, looking like something from the last century, came walking through all that smoke and dust and debris paying no attention at all to any of us or all the live ammunition we'd blasted that pass with.

IN THE END, WHEN THE SMOKE FROM THE PASS CLEARED, when the dust from the rumbling tanks settled, when the echo of bugle and cannon ceased in the desert, when the practical jokes that alleviated the tension and fear for what was ahead were played, the soldiers of the Mojave followed their general off to war. First to North Africa where Patton commanded the amphibious landing of the Western Task Force in French Morocco, part of the first major campaign of the

ATTENTION—VETERANS OF THE DESERT TRAINING CENTER

In its effort to fill out the history of the Desert Training Center and to restore or preserve elements of the Camps wherever possible, the Bureau of Land Management wants to hear from all veterans of the Training Center. If you have not already done so, please write to tell them the months that you were there, the unit you were with, the kind of training you received, and accounts of your experiences there. If you know of others who were there, please share this information with them. Every letter from a veteran of the Center will be acknowledged. Desert training veterans, please write to either one of the following:
Everell Hayes, Area Manager, U. S. Bureau of Land Management, 901 Third Street, Needles, California 92363, OR to Bob O' Brian, California Desert District Office, 1695 Spruce Street, Riverside, California 92507.

Light tanks used in training are drawn up for a shot by the media, as they would be at a greater distance from each other in real maneuvers.

COURTESY BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

United States in World War II. Later to Sicily where what was won on the battlefield—besting his British rival General Montgomery as well as the Germans and Italians—was eclipsed by scandal and humiliation over Patton's slapping of a soldier in a field hospital. And finally to Europe, where in command of his beloved Third Army, Patton rolled across western Europe making his mark on history as a warrior to match those warriors he'd read and dreamed about since he was a boy in California, fighting a war he'd waited thirty-three army career years to fight.

In the end it was for this man, in spite of all his bombast and bravado, that the old soldiers gathered in the Mojave last summer. In an era that is short on heroes and long on international frustrations for the country they had fought for in World War II, here was a man who in time of war dealt with frustrations in a vernacular of word and deed everyone could understand: Grab them by the nose, kick them in the pants. In the last analysis, of course, the battles were fought, as John Wayne put it in the war movie *In Harm's Way*, as "all battles are fought, by scared men who'd rather be someplace else." From the spring of 1942 to the spring of 1944, for each American soldier who had his thirteen weeks of desert training, the Mojave was the someplace else before the battle.

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For background on Patton, see: H. Essame, *Patton: A Study in Command* (1974); Charles M. Province, *The Unknown Patton* (1983); Porter B. Williamson, *Patton's Principles* (1979); Charles Whiting, *Patton* (1970); Ladislas Farago, *Patton: Ordeal and Triumph* (1963).

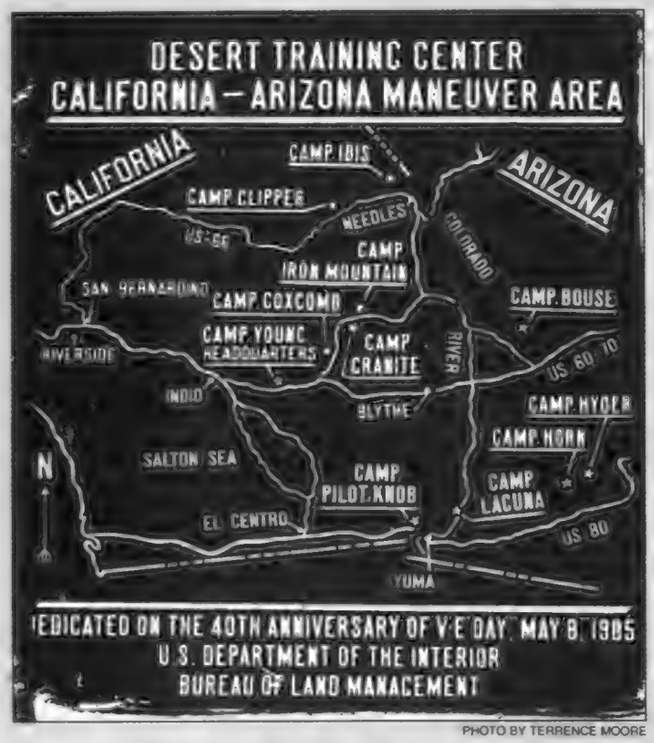

PHOTO BY TERRENCE MOORE

This plaque showing the camps in the Desert Training Center was dedicated on VE Day in 1985 during a reunion of the Center's veterans at Camp Young.

WHEN YOU GO

The U.S. Bureau of Land Management has plans for a permanent exhibit at the Desert Training Center to display memorabilia from the years 1942 to 1944, when over one million young Americans trained on the sands of this area for duty in World War II. The Bureau also plans to make some of the abandoned camps accessible to visitors.

At present, the only camp accessible to automobiles without four-wheel drive or without considerable walking is Camp Iron Mountain, located north of California Highway 62, approximately fifty-five miles east of Twentynine Palms, California, and fifty-five miles west of Parker, Arizona. Traveling east on highway 62, pass the intersection with highway 177, continue on for seven miles to the Iron Mountain Pumping Plant Road, and turn left (north). Proceed on this paved road to the entrance of the Pumping Plant, and then turn left (west). Follow this dirt road to the power-line service road (dirt). Turn left (south) and follow the power-line service road for two miles to a sign that will direct you to turn left again (east) and follow the dirt road to the campsite, approximately one-eighth mile away. Visitors must always be cautious about driving on these dirt roads. Often, flash floods wash deep sand drifts over the roads, making them impassable. So, before you drive on—stop, look, and consider, to avoid getting stuck. Visitors should realize that summer daytime temperatures often climb above 115°.

Acres of stone work line the abandoned roads and walkways of Camp Iron Mountain. Many rock designs of company symbols remain as well as special insignias such as: the seal of the United States made of small pieces of white quartz, the medical profession symbol (caduceus) made of small pieces of reddish-purple and white stone, and stones outlining the shape of an ambulance.

The chapel southwest of the flag circle is in good condition, while the outdoor altar northeast of the flag circle is in fair condition. A large relief map of the area is in fair condition, though showing the effects of weather and vandalism. The Bureau is seeking information regarding the map, as nothing is known about its history. Everell Hayes, BLM Area Manager, asks, "Does anyone know who built the map or what material it's made of?"

The Bureau asks that no one treasure-hunt in this area. Do not take anything from the Camp, and do not move any of the rock alignments. Leave only your footprints. For more information, write to U.S. Bureau of Land Management, 901 Third Street, Needles, California 92363. Telephone (619) 326-3896.

Among memorabilia recently donated to the Desert Training Center was the red guidon belonging to the 440th Antiaircraft Artillery Battalion (Coast). Battery C, which carried in Omaha Beach on D Day +3, was later lost in an ambush in Siam, but was recovered from the battlefield.

PHOTO BY TERRENCE MOORE

George C. Scott gives Patton a fair shake

by Jeff DeRome

PHOTO BY BOB GREENE, CBS

On location in England to film The Last Days of Patton, ***George C. Scott reflects the general's love of horses. During the last stages of the war in Europe, Patton gained the gratitude of all horse lovers by directing a combat command to move the famed Lipizzaners of the Spanish Riding School in Vienna to a safe location. Patton wished not only to protect them from the dangers of war but to ensure that they would be in territory controlled by the western allies. Another threat to the graceful performers of the airs of the*** haute école ***was the shortage of food; Patton shared the fear that these horses might be butchered to help feed the hungry populace.***

George C. Scott and Eva Marie Saint portray George and Beatrice Patton in the latest film about the flamboyant World War II general. The made-for-TV movie emphasizes the importance of family and other personal relationships in the general's life.

One look tells you that you're nowhere near the Mojave. You're out West alright. About thirty miles west of London, at the former Canadian Red Cross Memorial Hospital on the grounds of Cliveden, the Astor estate in pastoral Buckinghamshire, England. Recently closed, the hospital has become the temporary production headquarters for *The Last Days of Patton,* a film project that is, in television terms (the medium for which it is destined), a Major Project.

Major, if for no other reason than its star, George C. Scott. Scott is a certified Movie Star, who won the Oscar in 1970 for the feature film *Patton*. (Scott refused the award as he considers the process unfair—a contest between apples and oranges, "a beauty pageant in a slaughterhouse.") He has again donned Patton's four stars for the purpose of depicting the General's last days—or, more accurately, last months, as the film covers Patton's life from the war's end to his death in December 1945 from injuries sustained in an automobile accident.

No one held an ivory-handled revolver to Scott's head to get him to do this picture. He wanted to do it. In fact, he himself bought the rights to the book *The Last Days of Patton* (written by Ladislas Farago, author of *Patton: Ordeal and Triumph,* upon which the 1970 film *Patton* was based).

"It's taken me four years to get this damn thing going," says Scott during a break in the filming. "Seriously . . . four years. And a lot of money. My personal money," he adds, grinning. "But I believe that much in it."

Scott was impressed that Farago, after writing the exhaustive *Patton: Ordeal and Triumph,* still felt compelled to write *The Last Days*. . . . "Farago wrote the book on his deathbed," says Scott, "because he thought there was more to be said about Patton. And that's what I think."

Though it was almost universally hailed as a triumph, and won a total of seven Academy Awards, Scott feels that *Patton* was incomplete. "If you go back and watch the film, you realize that his wife and family aren't in it. Eisenhower isn't even in it! There's got to be more of a story to tell. Our appraisal of him brings in shadings of the man and his life that have never been presented before."

But why does Scott care? It has something to do with that strange alchemy that sometimes binds character and actor. Around the set, when they're waiting for George C. Scott to film a scene, you can hear the crew asking, "Where's the general?" There's an underlying sense of Scott's importance to

PHOTO BY BOB GREEN, CBS

the production. He's the general, too, on this set. He's not just an actor in the title role.

"I've lived with the guy for sixteen years!" proclaims Scott. "With all due modesty, I may know as much about Patton as anyone in the world. And I'm extremely fond of him as a human being. Extremely fond. . . ."

On the set *The Last Days of Patton* is getting first-class treatment, at least in part due to Chrysler Corporation, full sponsor of the film that will fill three hours of prime-time network television on CBS sometime in 1986. Among the cast and crew assembled are four Academy Award–winners: Scott; Eva Marie Saint who plays Patton's wife, Beatrice (*On the Waterfront,* 1954); director Delbert Mann (*Marty,* 1955); and costume designer Phyllis Dalton (*Dr. Zhivago,* 1965).

"I wanted to know what Beatrice Patton looked like, how she dressed," said Eva Marie Saint. But there were not many photos of Mrs. Patton in the library. So, Miss Saint telephoned Frank McCarthy, producer of the 1970 feature film *Patton* who suggested that she get in touch with the Pattons' daughter who was living in Massachusetts. "I called her, and after apologizing for invading her privacy, asked if I might ask a question or two about her mother. We talked for more than an hour," said the Award-winning actress. "She was wonderful, and the next day this arrived by express mail."

"This" is a package of photos and memorabilia from the family albums of Ruth Ellen Patton Totten, now seventy-two. In an accompanying letter, Mrs. Totten said she was delighted that Miss Saint was to portray her mother and that she had decided to lend her this rare collection "to make a character come alive through an actress."

Moved by Mrs. Totten's generosity, Eva Marie Saint has taken her stewardship very seriously. "The materials never leave my sight. I take them with me to the set each day. And they have been a help not only to me, but also to our costume designer." Phyllis Dalton has created a wardrobe for the character of Beatrice Patton based on Mrs. Totten's photos.

"I learned so much about Beatrice from Mrs. Totten and through these photos," said Miss Saint. "An actress has decisions to make in the creation of any character, but if you're playing a woman who actually lived, you might as well let her make some of those decisions for you."

Scrupulous attention is being paid to costuming, props, and general historical accuracy. Helping to insure that accuracy is a retired United States Army colonel named Julius L. Blatt. He was at Utah Beach on D-Day, got attached to the Third Army when Patton was activated, and had his Bronze Star pinned on by none other than General George S. Patton, Jr., himself. As Military Advisor on the project, Blatt says, "I've never been overruled. Del [director Delbert Mann] has accepted my recommendations at all times." Everybody on this project seems intent on getting it right. One suspects that this trickles down from on high, starting with Scott's own commitment to and affection for Patton.

"Everybody seems to want to see Patton as a swashbuckling loud-mouth," says Scott. "That's what they did to him in the press all through his life. I want him to get what I call a fair shake. And that's what I'm attempting to do." ✪

Jeff DeRome, *a lover of the American West, nevertheless lives in New York City where he works in the entertainment industry.*

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About the Author

Psycholinguist Suzette Haden Elgin has presented her innovative self-defense principles in a variety of formats. She has given workshops and seminars all over the U.S., including verbal self-defense sessions for doctors, lawyers, and other professionals. Dr. Elgin has also created a self-defense tape and a training manual for people who teach her self-defense techniques.

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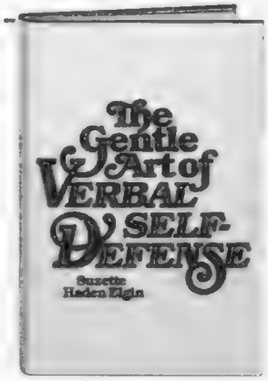

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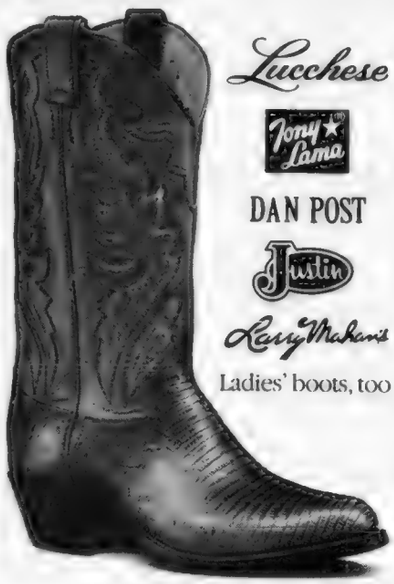

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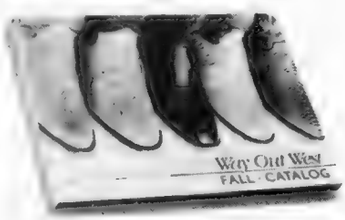

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Marshal Joe LeFors

A hired gun is silenced on the Wyoming cattle frontier

by William Kittredge and Steven M. Krauzer

JOE LEFORS MET TOM HORN IN THE FALL OF 1901 in Frank Meanea's saddlery shop in Cheyenne. The two men were a study in contrasts. LeFors was several inches under six feet and wore a bow tie, a waxed walrus mustache, and a three-piece suit with the signet of a fraternal organization on his watch fob. He had clean, vaguely Germanic features, and at the age of thirty-six was growing a bit soft above the belt. He looked like a cop.

Tom Horn was six feet, two inches tall and weighed 206 pounds, with broad sinewy shoulders and a slab-flat stomach. Five years older than LeFors, he wore trail clothing and worn boots. His thin hair was beginning to recede, and below his high forehead were small hard eyes that seemed long divorced from anything like humor. He looked like bad news.

Horn was picking up a scabbard that Meanea had custom-crafted for his .30-.30, and to make conversation the two men discussed the finer points—sighting accuracy, muzzle velocity, penetration power—of the popular Winchester lever-action rifle. LeFors found his new acquaintance "well posted on small arms and rather inclined to brag." After a time the two men shook hands and went their separate ways.

LeFors and Horn, strangers until this meeting, had lived similar lives, but now they worked different sides of the road. Joe LeFors was a United States Deputy Marshal, and Tom

vs Killer Tom Horn

Horn, with his dark mean eyes, was the last and most deadly hired gun in the West.

Joe LeFors was born in 1865 to farming folk in Paris, in the northeast corner of Texas. He was the fourth of five brothers. His father, James J., a Kentuckian, was fifty-seven that year, and his mother, Mahala Wester, a native of Tennessee, was thirty-eight. In 1878, the family moved to the Texas Panhandle, where they farmed outside Mobeetie on the Sweetwater River, in the area of the present-day town of LeFors. By 1880, both parents were dead.

During the next five years LeFors was a freighter, mail-route rider, and cowboy. He learned to handle a ten-yoke oxen

Both Marshal Joe LeFors (upper left) ***and Tom Horn*** (above) ***at one time served as livestock investigators for Montana and Wyoming stock growers, but now they worked different sides of the road. Claimed Horn, "Killing is my specialty."*** (Below) ***A crowd gathers for the hanging of Tom Horn in 1903 as National Guard troops patrol the intersection of 18th Street and Capitol Avenue in Cheyenne. The large brick building on the right is today a Masonic Lodge.***

ALL PHOTOS THIS PAGE COURTESY ARCHIVES—AMERICAN HERITAGE CENTER, UNIVERSITY OF WYOMING

Horn believed that life was a mean game with few rules, in which the deadliest son of a bitch with the most guns won.

team, work cattle, and adroitly avoid the renegade bands of hostile natives who frequently left the reservations in the Indian Territories to rustle range cattle and, when the spirit moved them, attack isolated white ranchers and riders.

In the spring of 1885, LeFors signed on with the H Bar Y Ranch at Gageby Creek east of Mobeetie. Hitting the trail on April 10, the H Bar Y crew drove 2,900 head of yearlings and two-year-olds 1,000 miles north across open range and runoff-swollen rivers to Buffalo, Wyoming, in sixty days. LeFors, sniffing opportunity, drew his pay and took a job on a local ranch. A competent, honest, and responsible hand, he was soon promoted to foreman.

In 1890 LeFors moved north to Miles City, the eastern Montana livestock center, where he worked for the Murphy Company, which had contracted to supply over 3,000 beeves annually to the Sioux Indians at the Standing Rock Agency. LeFors learned both Sioux and the hand-signing language that served as a *lingua franca* among different tribes and whites, and wrote that the Sioux named him "Tiatonka Che," or Beef Chief.

Miles City was the headquarters of W. D. Smith, chief investigator for the Montana Live Stock Association. On Smith's recommendation, LeFors was offered a job as brand inspector, assigned to northeastern Wyoming. LeFors was looking for a new challenge and accepted. Although it would be six years before they met face to face, another new inspector had recently taken the same position with the Wyoming Cattlemen's Association. For a time, at least, Joe LeFors and Tom Horn were colleagues.

Tom Horn was born near Memphis, Scotland County, Missouri, on November 21, 1860, and ran away from home at the age of fourteen, after his father had beaten him so bad that the young Horn spent a week in bed. A job as a teamster took Horn to New Mexico, where he quit to drive an Overland Mail stagecoach between Santa Fe and Prescott, Arizona. At the time, the Western and Chiricahua bands of Apache were waging perhaps the most viciously effective guerrilla war any native tribe ever launched against Europeans, and Horn's job should have been somewhere between perilous and suicidal. He managed to survive through luck and go-to-hell brass, and by age sixteen was fluent in Apache and Spanish. That skill, and the recommendation of Al Sieber, the German-born Indian-fighter, got Horn a job with the U.S. Army. For the next ten years, Horn and Sieber worked out of Fort Whipple as scouts, translators, and mercenaries.

Geronimo's surrender in 1886 ended the Apache Wars and idled Horn. Still well under thirty, he served as a deputy sheriff for a time and rodeoed on the side, taking the steer-roping buckle at Phoenix one year. In 1890 Horn joined the Pinkerton Detective Agency. During four years of service he was credited with breaking up the McCoy gang, a notorious bunch of murdering train robbers, but Horn later claimed that he never liked Pinkerton work. His trail finally led him to Wyoming and a job that was not so different from what he was used to. In 1894, Tom Horn had lived by his gun for twenty of his thirty-four years.

THE PROFESSION TO WHICH JOE LEFORS AND TOM Horn turned within a year of each other was variously called "brand inspector," "range detective," or "livestock investigator." The employer was either a stockgrowers' organization or a single large rancher, and the inspector had no official law enforcement status. His general instruction was to protect the financial interests of his boss, but methodology and the lengths to which an inspector carried his mandate varied with the man.

Stock growers were concerned about nesters, small ranchers who took advantage of the several Homestead Acts to claim, settle, and often fence off prime sections of bottomland range with access to year-around water. Although claiming no legal title to the land, the big ranchers did claim the rights of usage, eminent domain, and capitalist prerogative.

In some areas, sheep were another worry. Grazing woolies crop grass close to the ground's surface, and cowmen believed that this irredeemably ruined the range. The fact that they were wrong did not stop them from harassing sheepherders and their flocks.

Finally there was rustling, an unfortunate term that once innocuously meant "gathering," as in "rustling up some grub." Surely some men did steal cattle and horses as an ongoing criminal enterprise; indeed, Joe LeFors was assigned by his Montana bosses to the Powder River country of Wyoming because it was a major corridor for driving stolen Montana stock to the famous robbers' roost of Hole-in-the-Wall. But some stockmen used the accusation of rustling as a general weapon in what was essentially an economic war. The basically honest rancher who ignored the brand on a cow or two during spring roundup was technically a thief though hardly a threat to order. Among the completely blameless were those who ranched near rustler hole-ups and kept their traps shut from neighborliness and prudence, and those who were simply getting in a local stock-grower's hair.

Despite the similarity of title, Joe LeFors and Tom Horn worked under different orders. LeFors was to recover stolen Montana cattle that had been driven across the border into Wyoming and to obtain convictions of the cow thieves as a

deterrent to others with the same idea. Tom Horn combatted professional rustlers, too, but a significant part of his job was to intimidate and sometimes drive out nesters and sheepmen.

Further, LeFors and Horn brought different points of view to their work. LeFors believed in an honest day's work and the sanctity of property rights. He was a meticulous detective with an eye for detail, and his successful cases are marked by doggedness rather than brilliant deductive leaps of faith. He concentrated on the professional bunches and was with the small army that finally breached Hole-in-the-Wall in 1897. Later, LeFors was a member of the posse that trailed Butch Cassidy's Wild Bunch after it blew up the express car on the Overland Flyer. Around 1900, LeFors accepted a commission as a Deputy United States Marshal. His superior, Frank A. Hadsell, was a Federal appointee who spent most of his time on his sheep ranch near Rawlins; so, the day-to-day marshalling fell to LeFors. In his first year he successfully apprehended a train robber and a counterfeiter.

Tom Horn, on the other hand, believed that life was a mean game with few rules, in which the deadliest son of a bitch with the most guns won. Horn saw himself as that son of a bitch. The Army had paid him to hunt down Apaches, and the Pinkertons had paid him to hunt down anyone for whom money was offered. In either case, the employer rarely cared whether the prey came in breathing or stiff. If capitalist ranchers were willing to pay to fight rustlers or rivals—or to stop them dead—Horn saw it as about the same job. "I'm an exterminatin' son of a bitch," he once proclaimed.

Hired guns were nothing new to the West when Horn sold his to the stock growers of Wyoming in 1894. They dated from the years immediately after the Civil War, when a lot of men with killing experience were out of work. Before the nester troubles began in the West in the mid-1880s, gunslingers worked for mining magnates with labor trouble and railroads bothered by road agents. Historian Paul Trachtman writes:

> Of all the gunfighters, these mercenaries were the hardest to classify. As a group, they were neither outlaws nor lawmen, though many had pursued both careers in the past. In their role as vigilantes, they usually operated not so much in defiance of the law as simply beyond its reach.

After abortive service in the cause of the Spanish-American War (Horn caught malaria and was mustered out in Florida), Horn killed two alleged rustlers, Dart Isham and Matt Rash, in another notorious outlaw stronghold, Brown's Park, near the Wyoming-Colorado-Utah border. Then, in the spring of 1901,

COURTESY ARCHIVES—AMERICAN HERITAGE CENTER, UNIVERSITY OF WYOMING

His pallor reflecting his months of confinement, Tom Horn stands in the hallway of the Laramie County Jail in Cheyenne during his trial for the murder of Willie Nickell.

As Marshal, LeFors considered it his duty to pursue the killer. After a time he became convinced it was Tom Horn.

Horn went to work for John Coble, scion of a wealthy Pennsylvania family who had given up an appointment to the U.S. Naval Academy to horse-ranch at Iron Mountain, Wyoming. Coble was attracted to the romantic figure of Horn as an embodiment of the just-finished century and the Old West, and put him to work searching out rustlers and other troublemakers in the neighborhood. It was Horn's perhaps overzealous execution of this assignment that led to that first meeting with Marshal Joe LeFors.

GLENDOLENE MYRTLE KIMMELL WAS A MINOR though catalytic character in the drama to come. A strange little woman with almond-eyed, vaguely Oriental features who had left her Missouri home to teach at the Iron Mountain School, she idolized Horn and was his occasional lover. To a reporter for *The Cincinnati Enquirer*, she swore that Tom Horn was "a man who embodied the characteristics, the experiences and the code of the old frontiersman."

Glendolene Kimmell boarded with the homesteading family of Victor Miller, neighbors to the family of Kels P. Nickell. Nickell had outraged nesters and big cattlemen alike by bringing in sheep; in the spring of 1901, Nickell and Miller were also feuding over a fist-fight between two of their sons at a dance. On the morning of July 18, 1901, fourteen-year-old Willie Nickell was found at the corral gate, shot dead. He was a big lad and was wearing a low-brimmed hat and an overcoat against the early-morning high-country chill, and the murderer may have mistaken him for his father.

Tom Horn, whose reputation as a killer was so potent by now that he usually needed only to be seen riding the range to stop rustling in an area, was accused of the murder, as was Victor Miller. Horn claimed that he was on a train between Cheyenne and Laramie the day of the killing. Miller was, ironically, alibied by schoolteacher Kimmell, who testified to a coroner's jury that Miller was at his home when the killing occurred.

Seventeen days after Willie Nickell was killed, his father was shot in the arm, hip, and side from ambush, and while he was in the hospital several masked men fired into his flock, killing a couple dozen sheep. Kels Nickell finally saw the bloody handwriting on the wall and removed to Cheyenne to work as a night watchman for the Union Pacific.

Enter Joe LeFors.

Partially through pressure from the cattlemen of the Cheyenne Club, the investigation into the Nickell shooting was eventually dropped by local lawmen, but as U.S. Marshal, LeFors considered it his duty to pursue the killer. After a time he became convinced it was Tom Horn. He knew that Horn had killed men for money; anyone who had heard Horn's barroom crowing knew that. There was a wealth of circumstantial evidence as well, although it is notable that LeFors was unable ever to prove Horn's guilt through evidence or witnesses. LeFors later admitted to Horn, "In the Willie Nickell killing I could never find your trail, and I pride myself on being a trailer."

Still, LeFors had no motive for hounding Tom Horn besides a belief in his guilt and a sense of justice. Even if LeFors had been under any external pressure, it would have come from stockmen's allies, from the governor, himself (who had once almost hired Horn as a regulator), on down, and it would have pressed LeFors to drop the case.

LeFors's investigation began while Kels Nickell was still in the hospital, when he interviewed Mrs. Mary Mahoney Nickell at the family's Iron Mountain ranch. After eliminating as suspects a half-breed barn-painter and family-enemy Miller, LeFors settled on Horn. At about this point, LeFors asked Police Chief Sandy McKneal for an introduction when they spotted Horn in Meanea's saddlery.

Not long afterwards, an informant told LeFors that Horn had arrived in Laramie the day of the killing on a "steamy shaken horse" and had left a bloodstained sweater at a cobbler's shop. Still, all LeFors's "evidence" remained anecdotal, hearsay, or circumstantial. Even by the investigative standards of the time, LeFors could not convict on the basis of what he had, and knew it.

Meanwhile, Tom Horn was in Denver, drinking heavily and avoiding Wyoming for a time. Denver was a cosmopolitan city by the turn of the century, and Horn a charming anachronism who blew loud about himself, especially when drunk. Although the faithful Glendolene Kimmell wrote to warn him that LeFors would not let the Nickell matter lie, Horn went on accepting free drinks from amused bankers and petty politicians in the Denver public houses.

At the very least, Tom Horn was a bad drunk. At worst, he may have been losing touch with reality and his own mortality. He apparently made dangerous but less than damning allusions to his role in the Nickell killing before several witnesses, despite Glendolene's warning. On another occasion, Horn abused for sport a compact citified dude who had the nerve to take the spot at the bar rail next to Horn. The dude turned out to be a nationally ranked prizefighter known as "Young" Corbett. Corbett broke Horn's jaw and battered him into unconsciousness.

COURTESY WYOMING STATE ARCHIVES, MUSEUMS AND HISTORICAL DEPARTMENT

Made up of men who knew and understood the West that Tom Horn operated in, the jury that decided his fate poses with Bailiff George Proctor.

WHILE HORN WAS DRINKING HIS MEALS THROUGH a straw in Denver, a woman Pinkerton working undercover with LeFors got Glendolene Kimmell liquored up. Glendolene shared Horn's fancy for hootch, braggadocio, and the confusion of reality and might-have-been, because she told the woman agent that she had brought Tom Horn sandwiches while he lay in ambush for Kels Nickell, Willie's father.

On sobering up the next morning, Glendolene must have had an inkling that she had mouthed off too much, because she sent word that she wished to see LeFors in her hotel room. There she asked point-blank if Horn was a suspect. LeFors evaded the question, assuring her only that everything would turn out all right. According to LeFors, the interview ended this way:

> I said, "Well, forget our talk."
> She laughed and said, "When I sent for you I fully intended to kill you but I believe you are all right now." While she was talking she shook a keen-edged dagger out of her sleeve.
>
> "I didn't know what you wanted," I told her, "or who I was going to meet with you when I was coming upstairs," and I shook an automatic [pistol] out of my sleeve. She laughed and we shook hands and declared we would be friends.
>
> The woman was just about as dangerous as Horn himself. I think she was about one-half Spanish or something, not entirely all-American.

Then, about the first of the year 1902, six months after Willie Nickell died, LeFors got a letter from W. D. Smith of

During the year between Horn's trial and execution, the atmosphere in Cheyenne was a combination of siege and circus.

Miles City, his old Chief Inspector from his range detective days. Smith was looking for a "good man to do some secret work," involving rustling on the Big Moon River. The letter gave LeFors the beginnings of an idea. He forwarded it to John Coble's Iron Mountain Ranch, where Horn had returned, offering him the job. Horn was enthusiastic. Addressing LeFors as "Friend Joe," Horn wrote back that he "would like to take up that work." He continued:

> I don't care how big or bad his [W. D. Smith's] men are or how many of them there are, I can handle them. . . . Put me in communication with Mr. Smith whom I know well by reputation and I can garantee him the recommendation of every cow man in the state of Wyoming in this line of work. . . . I can handle his work . . . with less expense in the shape of lawyer and witness fees than any man in the business. . . . Joe you yourself know what my reputation is although we have never been out together.

It was the response—and the opportunity—LeFors had been hoping for. On Sunday, January 12, he met Horn at the Cheyenne railroad station, and from there the two cordial acquaintances went to LeFors's office for a final interview by LeFors on behalf of W. D. Smith. Parts of their conversation went this way:

> *Horn:* I don't want to be making reports to anybody at any time. If a man has to make reports all the time, they will catch the wisest S.O.B. on earth. These people are not afraid of shooting, are they?
> *LeFors:* No, they are not afraid of shooting.
> *Horn:* I shoot too much I know. You know me when it comes to shooting.
>
> * * *
>
> *Horn:* The only thing I was ever afraid of was that I would be compelled to kill an officer, or a man I didn't want to; but I would do everything to keep from being seen, but if he kept after me, I would certainly kill him.
>
> * * *
>
> [Horn told LeFors that he had lain in wait for Willie Nickell for at least three days, with nothing to eat except a little raw bacon.] *Horn:* I get so hungry that I could kill my mother for some grub, but I never quit a job until I get my man.
>
> * * *
>
> *LeFors:* How far was Willie Nickell killed?
> *Horn:* About 300 yards. It was the best shot that I ever made, and the dirtiest trick I ever done.

The two men went downstairs for a drink. They returned in fifteen minutes to finish the interview.

> *Horn:* The first man I killed was when I was only twenty-six years old [presumably Horn was not counting Indians]. He was a coarse S.O.B.
> *LeFors:* How much did you get for killing these fellows? In the Powell and Lewis case you got $600 apiece. You killed Lewis in the corral with a six-shooter. I would like to have seen the expression on his face when you shot him. [William Lewis and Fred Powell were Iron Mountain ranchers whose 1895 slayings remained officially unsolved.]
> *Horn:* He was the scaredest S.O.B. you ever saw. How did you come to know that, Joe?
> *LeFors:* I have known everything you have done, Tom, for a great many years. I know where you were paid this money on the train between Cheyenne and Denver. Why did you put the rock under the kid's head after you killed him? This is one of your marks, isn't it?
> *Horn:* Yes, that is the way I hang out my sign to collect money for a job of this kind.
> *LeFors:* Have you got your money yet for the killing of Nickell?
> *Horn:* I got that before I did the job.
> *LeFors:* You got $500 for that. Why did you cut the price?
> *Horn:* I got $2,100.
> *LeFors:* How much is that a man?
> *Horn:* That is for three dead men, and one man shot at five times. Killing is my specialty. I look at it as a business proposition, and I think I have a corner on the market.

A connecting door behind LeFors's desk led to a storeroom, and in preparation LeFors had removed the door, planed off the bottom two inches, and rehung it. Behind the gimmicked door, Deputy Sheriff Leslie Snow and district court stenographer Charles Ornhaus were eavesdropping. As soon as LeFors and Horn went downstairs for another drink, Ornhaus, who had taken down the entire interview in shorthand, hurried out to have his notes typed up. A warrant was issued the next morning, and Horn was arrested by the sheriff, a deputy, and Sandy McKneal in the lobby of the Inter-Ocean Hotel, while Joe LeFors looked on.

THE TRIAL OF TOM HORN FOR THE MURDER OF Willie Nickell was held in the fall of 1902, before a jury of eight ranchers, a cowhand, a butcher, a blacksmith, and a hotel bellhop. The head of Horn's defense team, engaged on his behalf by Horn's cattle-baron employers, was John W. Lacey, general counsel for the Union Pacific Railroad and former state Supreme Court Chief Justice. The wealthy stock growers were anxious to help Horn in every possible way, because he had the power to implicate some of them as accessories to several—perhaps dozens—of murders.

Parts of the prosecution's argument were trivial: Horn's admission that he had been riding in the vicinity of the Nickell ranch the day before Willie was shot; the introduction of the record of a court hearing from eleven years earlier, in which Kels Nickell was accused but never formally charged with attacking John Coble, Horn's friend and employer, with a pocketknife. The weight of the state's case rested solely upon the damning, if possibly tainted, confession. Ornhaus's transcript was admitted as evidence, and Joe LeFors attested to its accuracy and the circumstances under which it had been obtained. Both men, and witness Leslie Snow, declared that Horn had been sober throughout the conversation.

Through attorney Lacey, Horn offered parallel defenses. First, Horn claimed he was intoxicated and bragging during the LeFors interview and introduced character witnesses to testify that he was a surly, loud-mouthed, blustering drunk. In the alternative, Horn insisted that he had been speaking hypothetically, and only to impress a future employer with his familiarity with the accepted methods of combatting rustlers. According to Horn, portions of the transcript that would support this contention were edited out.

On October 23 Tom Horn was adjudged guilty and condemned to death; on appeal the state Supreme Court sustained the conviction and sentence. But with the verdict, the suspense over the Tom Horn case only tautened. Would Tom Horn "peach" on his employers to save his skin? Would those who sided with him—or those who feared what he knew—try to break him out, or even assassinate him?

The answer to the first question was no. As one Wyoming cattleman said after Horn was finally hanged, "He died without 'squealing,' to the great relief of many very respectable citizens of the West." But during the year between trial and execution, the atmosphere in Cheyenne was a combination of siege and circus.

Before Thanksgiving, 1902, it was widely broadcast that Butch Cassidy and the dreaded Wild Bunch were gathering to ride to Tom Horn's liberation. The fact that Butch and Sun-

COURTESY ARCHIVES—AMERICAN HERITAGE CENTER, UNIVERSITY OF WYOMING

Horn hand-braided this horsehair lariat during his imprisonment in Laramie County Jail, completing it the day he was hanged. The gunman kept quiet about his co-conspirators to the end.

Horn occupied his spare moments with escape attempts, plotting elaborate liberation schemes with fellow prisoners.

dance were in Bolivia and at least half a dozen of the old gang doing time or dead did little to ruin this tall tale's barroom currency. Meanwhile, Horn occupied his spare moments with escape attempts. He wrote to other prisoners in match-soot on scraps of blanket and shirttail, plotting elaborate liberation schemes. At various times he tried to fashion keys from broom-wire, soupbones, a piece of wood, and shards of glass. On one occasion, Under-Sheriff Richard Proctor took a table knife from the prisoner; on another he found a length of lead pipe hidden in Horn's pant leg.

Then, on August 9, 1903, Horn and Jim McCloud, charged with armed robbery and the only other prisoner on the jail's top floor, managed to overpower Proctor. Although Proctor had the keys in his pocket, he insisted the ring was locked in the safe. The prisoners marched Proctor to the strongbox, but instead of the key he removed a revolver which he fired four times, wounding McCloud slightly.

Horn and McCloud raced downstairs, but by now Proctor was ringing the firebell to give the alarm, and a crowd was converging on the jailhouse. McCloud jumped on the sheriff's horse and rode west, but was captured immediately. Horn ran on foot in the other direction. Hatless and carrying Proctor's sneak-gun, Horn attracted the attention of a shopkeeper named Eldrich, who pulled his own gun from under the counter, stepped outside, and shot Horn in the neck, not seriously. When Horn tried to return fire, he discovered he could not work the modern automatic lock safety of Proctor's pistol. Merchant Eldrich disarmed the desperado, and officers arrived in time to keep the mob from beating Horn to death. As a final adventure, it was an ignominious coda to a notorious career.

IN THE LAST DAYS BEFORE HORN'S EXECUTION, THE Wyoming capital seemed moonstruck. Rumors persisted that gangs of cowboys were massing outside town, prepared to sack the town if necessary to free Tom Horn. Governor Fenimore Chatterton, himself the object of death threats, called out the state militia, and machine-gun nests covered the jail. At least twenty-five sheriff's deputies from all over the state stood rifle guard in nearby buildings and at every window of the courthouse. Sheriff Edward Smalley, a grocer appointed a few weeks before Horn's arrest to fill an unexpired term, nervously warned citizens to approach the jail at their own risk, while every arriving train brought fresh carloads of morbid curiosity seekers.

On the street in front of the jail, Kels Nickell, father of the victim, patrolled with a shotgun, buttonholing passersby like Coleridge's Ancient Mariner to declare his determination to turn Horn into dogmeat should the killer attempt another jailbreak. Inside on the cellblock, a deathwatch detail stared glumly as Horn completed a horsehair riata he'd been hand-weaving for months. As he worked he could hear the crash and thud from the jailhouse courtyard as 200-pound sandbags were dropped through the trap over and over again to test the gallows.

The execution, on November 20, 1903, the day before Horn's forty-third birthday, was anticlimactic, as it had to be. On the way across the courtyard Horn paused to shake the hands of two old rodeo pards, Charlie and Frank Irwin. Charlie asked if Horn had confessed, and Horn answered, "No." While Horn stood on the scaffold, the Irwin boys sang the old railroad hymn, "Keep Your Hand upon the Throttle and Your Eye upon the Rail," which, according to an account in the Chicago *Record-Herald*, brought "tears to the eyes of all except Horn himself." Horn's last words, to County Clerk Joseph Cahill as he adjusted Horn's restraining straps, were, "Ain't losing your nerve are you, Joe?" The trap was sprung at 11:08 in the morning, and sixteen minutes later Horn was pronounced dead of a broken neck. The handpicked witnesses congratulated Under-Sheriff Proctor on a flawless execution.

In parts of Wyoming today, smart-mouthing about the Tom Horn case remains a fine way to incite barroom violence. A colleague of ours who grew up in the Iron Mountain country, and whose grandfather occasionally hosted Tom Horn when he rode their part of the range, reports that sentiment in that precinct remains nearly unanimous in Horn's favor. Beyond doubt, the confession upon which his conviction depended would be summarily ruled inadmissible in a modern courtroom. In 1977, when *In Wyoming* magazine published a biographical sketch of Kels Nickell by a nephew, Dennie Trimble Nickell, even this admittedly biased writer did not flatly state that Tom Horn murdered his cousin.

Joe LeFors's role in Tom Horn's downfall did not appreciably affect his life or career. He remained with the U.S. Marshal's office until April of 1908, when he went to work for the Wyoming Wool Growers Association. He was based in Wyoming for another dozen years after that, although he makes vague and tantalizing reference in his autobiography to other adventures during this period, including a "hazardous and thrilling" trip up an unnamed river in Central America; the shipwreck of a native schooner in the Caribbean, "the closest call I ever had;" and travel in Mexico and Argentina "as an officer and also as a private citizen." He moved to southern California in 1921 but returned to Wyoming after a couple of seasons. He was seventy-five when he died on October 1, 1940, in Buffalo, the town where he had settled at the end of the cattle drive that had first brought him to Wyoming fifty-

five years earlier.

Joe LeFors was a cop, private or public, for over thirty years, during a period when law was scarcer and gunplay more common than today. He appears to have done a good job. But LeFors lacked the flair for publicity of a Wyatt Earp, the glib good-fellowship of a Bat Masterson, or the tragic flaws of a Wild Bill Hickok. The facts of his most noteworthy moment will always be overshadowed by the legend of his adversary, and Joe LeFors will remain a footnote to the last chapter of Western history. ✪

This essay, in slightly different form, appears as the Afterword to the novel Gunsmoke River *by Owen Rountree (Ballantine Books, 1985).*

BIBLIOGRAPHIC NOTE

On the day he died, Tom Horn gave John Coble a pencilled manuscript, which Coble published the next year as *Life of Tom Horn by Himself*. It is a vividly written description of Horn's arrival in Wyoming in 1894. In *I, Tom Horn*, a superb novel by Will Henry which purports to be a continuation of the autobiography, Horn denies his guilt in the Nickell killing. In his biography *The Saga of Tom Horn*, Dean Krakel also argues that Horn was innocent of the Nickell killing, although Krakel acknowledges that Horn was a hired killer for cattle interests. Another excellent Horn biography is *The Last of the Badmen* by Jay Monaghan. A detailed treatment of Horn's career as a hired gun appears in *The Gunfighters* volume of the Time/Life series *The Old West*, with text by Paul Trachtman. For reproductions of several contemporary newspaper accounts of the Tom Horn affair, as well as photographs of the principals, see *The Authentic Wild West: The Gunfighters*, by James D. Horan.

Joe LeFors wrote his autobiography, *Wyoming Peace Officer*, shortly before his death, but it was not published until 1953. LeFors was also the prototype of the title character of *Whispering Smith*, a best-selling novel by Frank H. Spearman (1859–1937) that was filmed in silent and sound versions.

William Kittredge *will publish a book of essays,* Redneck Secrets, *with Gray Wolf Press in 1986.* **Steven M. Krauzer** *writes Westerns and thrillers. He is the author of the screenplay for the forthcoming film* The Fine White Line. *As Owen Rountree,* **Kittredge** *and* **Krauzer** *write the* Cord *series of Western novels.*

BOTH PHOTOS COURTESY ARCHIVES—AMERICAN HERITAGE CENTER, UNIVERSITY OF WYOMING

(Above) ***Charles Horn claims his brother's body after the hanging in Cheyenne to take it to Boulder, Colorado, where Tom's funeral was held.*** (Right) ***Dapper and respectable, Marshal LeFors represented law and order in a lawless land. He faded into relative obscurity after his triumph over Horn, eclipsed by the better-known reputation of the flamboyant killer.***

The Grattan

Plate I

To begin his series of drawings depicting the Grattan massacre, Black Horse showed the happening that caused all the trouble—the killing of an emigrant's cow by a Miniconjou Sioux who was visiting his relatives in a Brulé camp. In this scene, the Miniconjou and a friend prepare to butcher the cow, whose thin flank and protruding ribs seem to offer small expectations for a hearty feast.

Massacre

As drawn from the Indian point of view

Drawings by Black Horse

The Massacre

On a summer day in 1854, in Dakota Territory, Brevet Second Lieutenant John Grattan, United States Army, formed his twenty-nine infantrymen in a battle line in the center of a large Sioux camp and ordered them to fire. The Sioux response was quick and fatal, and within a few moments Lieutenant Grattan and every member of his party lay wounded and dying. One young private crawled into some bushes and survived that day, but his wounds brought death two days later. Though responsibility for the massacre of Lieutenant Grattan and his command is commonly placed on the inexperienced and belligerent young lieutenant himself, the Army mounted a vigorous punitive campaign against the Sioux, leading to a period of bloody confrontations.

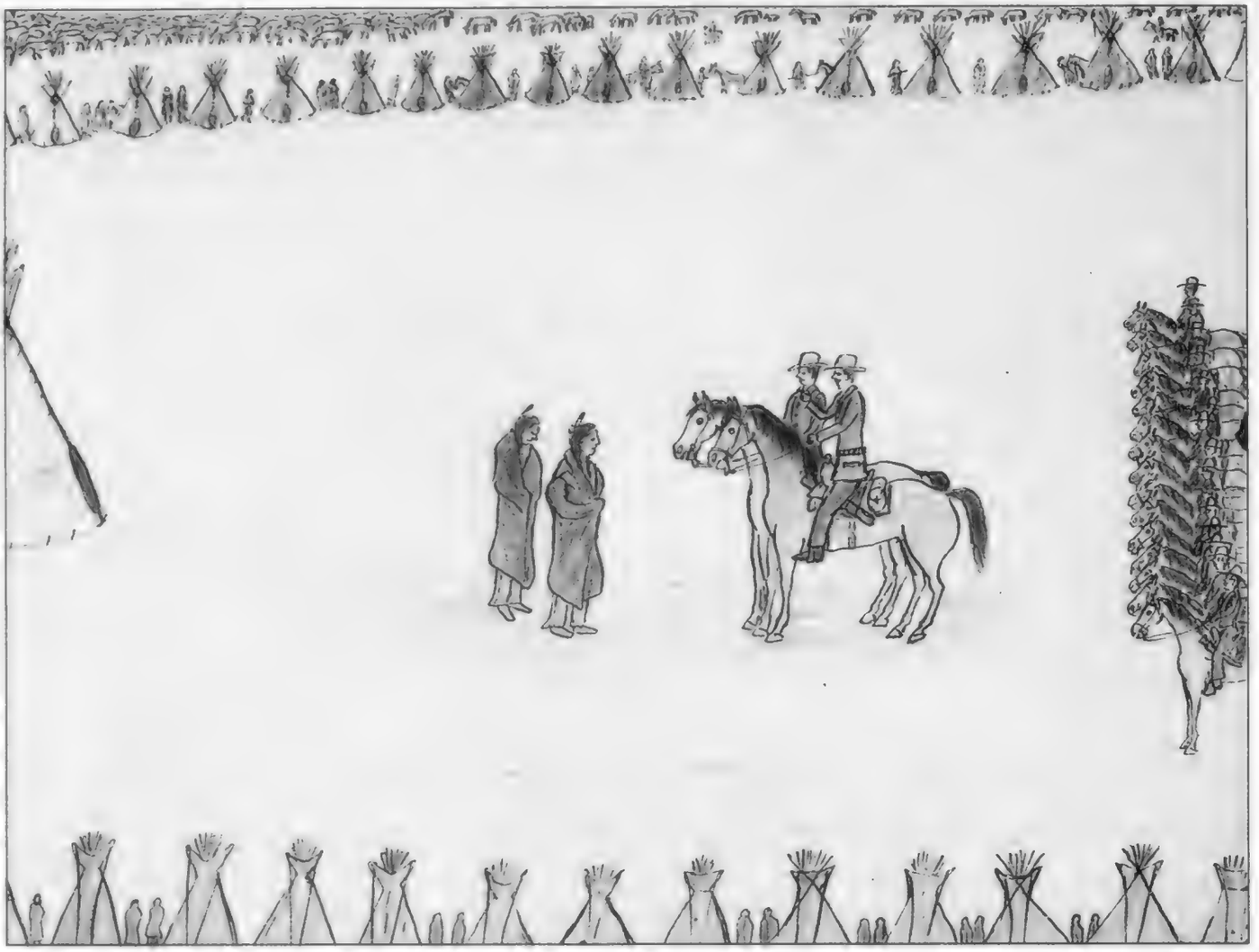

Plate II

Black Horse's drawing of the confrontation between Grattan's party and the Brulé Sioux reflects either his grandfather's desire to heighten the drama of the scene or his lapse of memory. Grattan's men were infantry, not cavalry as shown. We do know that the interpreter was mounted. Here, next to the lieutenant, he uses gestures with insulting remarks as he berates the Brulé chief, Conquering Bear. At left is the lodge of the offending Miniconjou, who refuses to come out and give himself up. Activities shown in the background are corroborated by the account of a white eyewitness who viewed the event from the nearby house of a trader. The Brulé are catching their ponies and readying their weapons in case the talk ends in a fight.

The Grattan affair (and its unfortunate consequences) began in the valley of the North Platte late in the afternoon of August 17, 1854, when a cow from a westering emigrant caravan wandered near a village of the Brulé Sioux. A vengeful Miniconjou Sioux killed the cow and shared the feast with friends. When the owner of the animal reached nearby Fort Laramie the next day, he complained to the commanding officer, twenty-five-year-old Second Lieutenant Hugh Fleming. Chief Conquering Bear of the Brulé Sioux also arrived at the Fort that same day to report that the cow had been killed by a visiting Miniconjou, not one of his tribe. Wishing to avoid trouble, Conquering Bear offered to pay generously for the slaughtered animal.

At first, Lieutenant Fleming was of a mind to wait for the agent from the Indian Bureau to settle the matter. He was expected a few days later to make the annual distribution of goods to more than 4,000 Sioux gathered near Fort Laramie to receive the bounty guaranteed them by treaty for keeping the peace and allowing free passage on the Platte River Road. But according to eyewitnesses, twenty-four-year-old John Grattan (who had been graduated from the United States Military Academy the preceding year) importuned Fleming to let him "crack it to the Sioux." Inexperienced and cocky, Grattan had often bragged that "with thirty men, he could whip the

combined force of all the Indians of the prairie." Fleming agreed to let him take a party to arrest the offending Miniconjou, adding the caution that Grattan was "to act upon his own discretion, and to be careful not to hazard an engagement without certainty of success."

On the afternoon of August 19, Lieutenant Grattan set out for the Sioux camp, seven miles away, with twenty-nine infantry volunteers, one interpreter, two howitzers, and a wagon. Observers reported that Grattan was very agitated, that he was determined to have a fight with the Indians, and that he was "very loath" to return without the Miniconjou, dead or alive. Nearing the Indian camp, Grattan stopped at the trading post of James Bordeaux and asked the trader to summon Chief Conquering Bear. When the Bear arrived, he told Grattan that the Indian who had killed the cow refused to give himself up, saying that he would rather die first.

Bordeaux attempted the role of peacemaker, trying to prevent a showdown between Grattan and the Indians. The trader warned Bear and the other chiefs that the offending Miniconjou must be surrendered, while he cautioned Grattan against entering the Sioux camp of over six hundred lodges in a show of force. And Bordeaux pointed out that the interpreter, who had become irascibly drunk along the way, was making matters worse with his taunting gestures and shouted insults

Plate III

After fatal exchanges, Conquering Bear lies bleeding and mortally wounded in front of the Miniconjou's lodge. Lieutenant Grattan (lying closest to Bear) and his men are all dead. Though Black Horse shows most of the slain soldiers with arrows in their bodies, we know from eyewitnesses that the Brulé also used guns in this encounter. Ironically, the Miniconjou who caused all the trouble remained in his lodge, untouched by the bloodletting.

Plate IV

According to the account given by Black Horse's grandfather, the hated interpreter was the last person killed. He sought to escape on his horse, but the kneeling Brulé at the bottom of the drawing has just fired and wounded the interpreter's mount, throwing the rider to the ground and placing him at the mercy of the pursuing Indians.

that angered the Sioux.

Grattan stated that he would take the Miniconjou, dead or alive, and moved his party into the open area of the camp, facing the lodge of the resisting troublemaker. After a number of challenges by Grattan, refusals to surrender by the Miniconjou, continued insults from the interpreter, and efforts by Conquering Bear to prevent bloodshed, the lieutenant ordered his men to fire. Among the first to fall was the peacemaking Chief. Heavy Indian fire immediately took out Grattan and the interpreter, and within a few minutes all of the soldiers were mortally wounded.

At the time, members of the public, the Army, and the Indian Bureau held several opinions regarding the causes of the Grattan tragedy. But over the years, many historians have come to agree with William Vaux, chaplain at Fort Laramie when the massacre occurred, that the "cause can be traced to the fact of the garrison being left under the command of inexperienced and rash boys."

The Drawings

Sometime during the 1920s, Western collector Fred Hackett chanced to visit an elderly Oglala named Black Horse near Pine Ridge, South Dakota. Among the old papers in Black Horse's cabin, Hackett noticed five colored drawings having

to do with the Grattan massacre. When questioned, Black Horse related that his grandfather had been in the Sioux camp near Fort Laramie when Grattan and his party were killed. After listening to his grandfather's account of the event, Black Horse drew the five pictures "the way he told him it had happened."

In the exchange of gifts at the close of Hackett's visit, Black Horse gave his drawings of the Grattan massacre to Fred Hackett. They remained part of the Hackett collection of Americana for over thirty-five years, when they were acquired by Carroll Friswold.

These unique drawings were first published by The Arthur H. Clark Company of Glendale, California, in a prize-winning volume *The Massacre of Lieutenant Grattan and his command by Indians* in 1983. The original drawings were done on buff-colored paper with the figures drawn in pen, pencil, and crayon. This book also includes a transcript of official statements describing the tragedy and events leading to it.

By arrangement with The Arthur H. Clark Company, we are pleased to bring you these unusual drawings by Black Horse, reflecting the interpretation of an Indian eyewitness to the Grattan tragedy.

Plate V

Bleeding from head and body, the interpreter lies dead with three arrows in his chest, while his wounded horse stands nearby. The Brulé are exuberant over the downfall of this special enemy who had purposely antagonized them on a number of occasions. They return to camp shouting and raising their arms in triumph. The man who crippled the horse is marked with an X; he is their hero.

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A LITTLE TIMBERLAND "TOMFLUMERY"

Comstock mining kings on wild ride in wooden wonder

QUITE LIKELY, THE UNOFFICIAL *HUMAN* SPEED RECord in the nineteenth century was established in Nevada. It happened in 1875, years before high-balling locomotives would race across the continent and decades before manned flight would shrink the planet.

The location was the general area of Virginia City, Nevada, where the Comstock silver-mining operations boomed during the 1860s and 1870s. As the mining companies gouged ever deeper into the mineral-rich earth, the need for timber to shore up the excavations grew more critical. Pressures in the underground mines, some of which extended as far as five miles, made cave-ins commonplace. It was generally conceded that the Comstock could not have continued operating for even twenty-four hours without the steady traffic of lumber and cordwood supplied by the verdant timberlands near Lake Tahoe.

But harvesting the lumber was one thing. Getting it to the mines was quite another. The mountains were steep and irregular, and footing was loose. The roads, dusty and choking in dry weather, became muddy and impassable in the rain and snow.

So, lumberman J. W. Haines of Douglas County came up with a solution in the mid-1860s. While simplicity itself, it turned out to be a pivotal point in the rapid development of the Comstock. Haines's brainchild was a V-shaped *flume*—nothing more than a giant trough of two-inch-thick planks two feet wide and sixteen feet long, nailed together into a "V." The slanting sides of this flume (as opposed to dry chutes and square-box flumes) assured that lumber would float freely on a rapid stream of water.

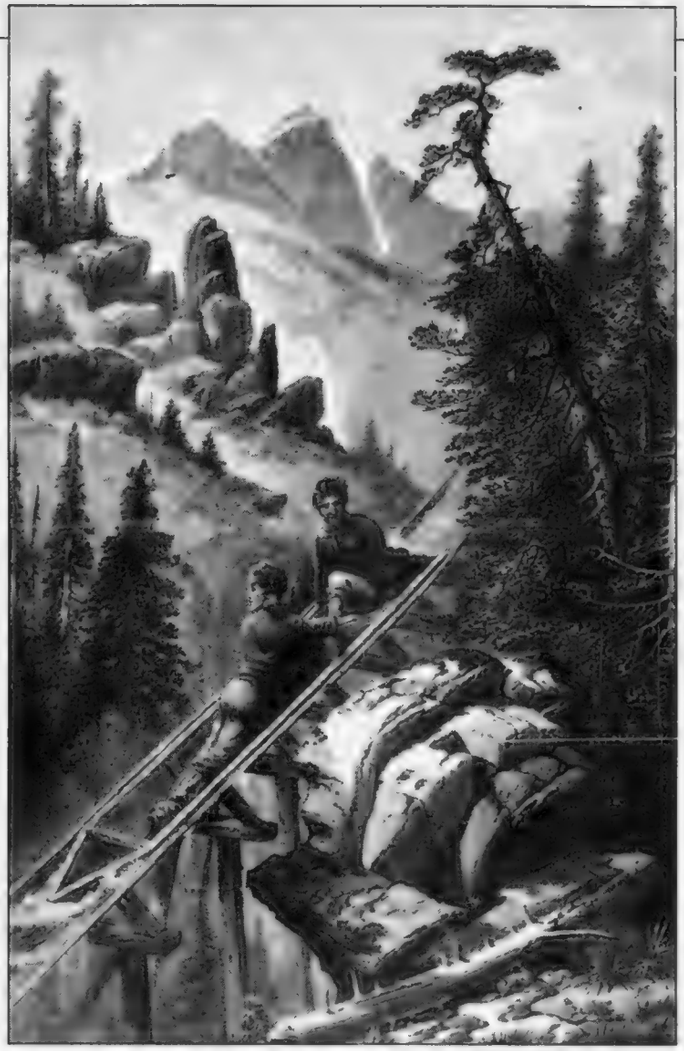
In order to appreciate the scope of the project, just realize that the flume contained two-million feet of lumber and twenty-eight tons of spikes and nails. It operated seventy feet above the ground in some places, and it could transport up to a half-million feet of lumber daily—enough to build more than thirty homes. Using 200 men, the flume's builders completed fifteen miles of trough—from Huffaker's Mill, north of Lake Tahoe, down to the Virginia and Truckee Railroad stop in Washoe Valley—in a scant ten weeks, and brought it in for the modest sum of $25,000. Reportedly, the new flume did the work of 2,000 horses. This giant quickly became a kind of "wooden wonder of the West." It sparked considerable curiosity as far east as New York City. And New Yorkers of the day were not easily convinced that anything of worth or wonder was to be found west of the Hudson.

H. J. Ramsdell, a reporter for the *New York Tribune*, heard tales of Nevada's "great flume" and visited the area to see for himself. Ramsdell was hosted by J. C. Flood and James G. Fair, both principals in the company that built the flume, and both multi-millionaires who had made their bundle in the mines. Understandably proud of their creation, Flood and Fair were eager to show it off to a journalist from the big city and invited Ramsdell to inspect the flume up close. Had the reporter guessed at the time just *how close*, he might not have accepted so willingly.

Ramsdell was awed by the operation, its simplicity even in its immensity. He was fascinated by the fact that the fifteen miles of trough actually ended at a point only eight miles away as the crow flies. Like a huge wooden snake, the flume twisted and turned for an additional seven miles in order to negotiate the irregular landscape.

What happened that day in 1875 is sketchy. It's hard to understand how otherwise intelligent, pragmatic businessmen would do what these men decided to do. The best guess is that Messrs. Flood and Fair dared each other to take a ride in the flume, and Ramsdell and John B. Hereford (who directed the construction of the flume) were sucked into the challenge. Workers at the flume site hurriedly rigged together two V-shaped "boats," which were little more than narrower versions of the flume itself. The fronts of the vessels were left open, while the rear portions were closed with boards, against which the water currents would act to propel the boats. Two narrow boards served as seats.

James Fair and H. J. Ramsdell would captain the first boat. At the last minute they requested a volunteer from the fifty-odd



COURTESY NEVADA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

In an artist's conception of the great flume ride, terrified passengers grip their careering, makeshift boat. Perhaps inspired by H. J. Ramsdell's account for the New York Tribune, *this illustration appeared in* Harper's Weekly, *June 2, 1877.*

by Robert Sagan

workers who were standing around—someone to accompany them who knew something about the flume. A carpenter, responding "above and beyond the call," agreed to go. It was a bad decision made *on top* of a bad decision. The second boat would carry Flood and Hereford, who apparently went along with the craziness because he felt obliged to demonstrate good faith in his own construction prowess.

AS SOON AS THE PASSENGERS HIT THE SEATS, THEY took off like human bullets in the furious flow of flume water. The makeshift boats bumped and careened wildly down the irregular course, over deep rocky gullies and around curved sections built along the sides of sheer cliffs. The trip could be compared to a ride on a modern-day roller coaster with the attendant asleep at the switch, except there was no power to switch off and no attendant to do the switching. They were on their own.

The occupants of the two boats, by this time hurtling down the flume at a terrifying rate of speed, would later admit they divided their time between cursing their stupidity and making peace with their Maker.

At one point, the lead boat carrying Ramsdell, Fair, and the carpenter hit a submerged object and stuck momentarily. The abrupt stop catapulted the unsuspecting carpenter out of the vessel and into the flume waters several feet ahead of the craft. This sudden lightening of its load permitted the boat to break free, and James Fair managed to collar the flailing carpenter and yank him back into the boat.

The second boat was lighter than the first, which meant it was only a matter of time before the second boat would catch up and crash into the lead boat. If they should crash at certain bad points along the trestle, all five men would likely be thrown out against the jagged rocks below. At times, where the flume was steepest, the speed was so great that the men could hardly breathe. Ramsdell later claimed he had been in eighty-mile-an-hour gales and never experienced the suffocating sensations caused by the rushing wind of their breakneck descent. Once, he put his head behind Fair's shoulders to shield his face and try to determine how fast they were traveling. He was scared out of his wits, but he wanted to know how long it would take to get to eternity.

Then, what all feared most finally happened. With the end of the trip in sight, the second boat carrying Flood and Hereford crashed into the first boat with a terrific impact. Flood got the worst of it, pitching forward unceremoniously on his face. The others fared slightly better. The five were thankful that the collision occurred in a relatively safe and slow area of the flume. Only seconds before, they had been traveling over a particularly hazardous stretch, where the outcome could have been disastrous. As it was, the bruised and battered men eagerly jumped clear as the boats slowed down near the end of the run.

The workers at the end of the flume were more than a little surprised to see their usually dapper bosses showing up at camp in such a bedraggled state—and in that particular mode of transportation.

Understandably, none of the men challenged the flume again. If it's true there are no atheists in foxholes, it's also true that the five men riding the flume that day were as devout as they ever would be. And H. J. Ramsdell returned to the *New York Tribune* to report to his readers that Manhattanites could no longer claim the "fast life" as their exclusive domain.

Robert Sagan *is a Reno-based public relations professional and free-lance writer.*

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- ☐ The West now leads in agriculture, high-tech and information.

Consider the implications:

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- ☐ The West will see the launch of more new high-tech, energy- and information-based companies.

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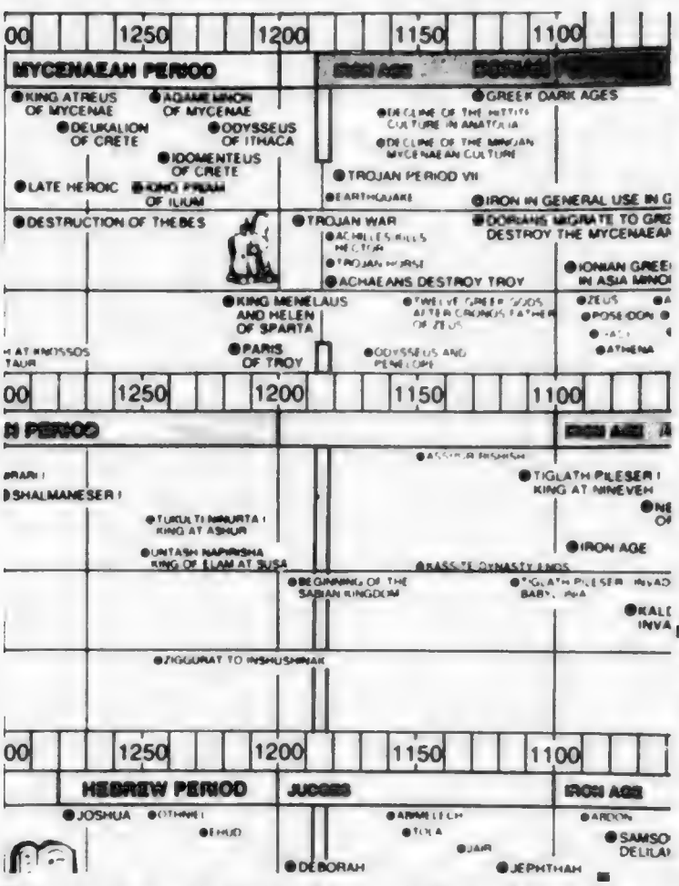

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A Hired Man for Christmas

The true story of an unforgettable drifter

THE GIANT OF A MAN WHO CALLED HIMSELF HENRY Boone suddenly appeared walking down the rutted lane that led in from the Lincoln Highway to our 1,500-acre ranch on Wyoming's Big Laramie River. He seemed to have stepped out of the early nineteenth century American West. He belonged back with the likes of William Ashley, Kit Carson, and William Bent, trapping beaver and fighting hostile Blackfoot and Arapaho along about 1831. But this was 1931. Arapahoes no longer menaced our property, which had once been their domain. Now, the scourge of the Laramie Plains was a far more ruthless foe—the Great Depression.

To the ten-year-old girl I was then, the stranger seemed more sinister than stable. Still I knew Father was hoping he was looking for work, because what we needed most, next to winning the Irish Sweepstakes, was a willing and dependable hired man. This fellow looked menacing instead. His slanty, lynx-like, green eyes were flecked with gold, like the sandy bed of a clear mountain stream. His long crooked nose had obviously been broken at least once and never reset. Lank brown hair hung halfway to his shoulders and his lean weathered cheeks were stubbled with a dark beard turning grey. His severe bear-trap of a mouth appeared to serve no other purpose than to wire his large lantern jaw in place.

Adding to his formidable aspect, he stood every inch of six-feet-four, was powerfully built and about my father's age, which was forty-five. He wore a battered felt hat, sun-faded Levi's and a fringed buckskin jacket, its near-mahogany color due to what I later learned was a rare combination of wood smoke, sweat, the dried blood of a variety of wild critters, and good skunk grease with which he routinely waterproofed his worn laced boots. Slung carelessly about his waist was a belt supporting a leather sheath in which rested a long hunting knife with a mottled grey deer-horn handle. In the weeks ahead I would come to regard this homely weapon with the reverence usually accorded the legendary blade of a Roland or El Cid.

Throwing his heavy tarp pack to the ground, he stood hipshot and haughty, square in front of the broad steps leading to the screened veranda that ran the length of our main house, where I waited at Father's side silently sizing up the stranger. Henry's frosty gaze swept the two-story building, its hand-hewn log walls, seasoned by sixty hard winters, now shining like topaz in the mellow October sun. He appraised our autumn-bright apple orchard, four rustic guest cabins, the clapboard bunkhouse, two stout, hip-roofed log barns, the peeled-log branding chute, and a maze of pole corrals angling down toward the riverbank and ford beyond. He appeared to be toting up the value of the place with the lordly air of a prospective buyer who is quite prepared to lay out hard cash for the entire spread. Instead he announced, as though addressing the J Flag Ranch itself, "I'm lookin' for work."

"Maybe you've come to the right place," Father said warmly, strolling down the gravel path toward him. "I sure could use a good hand with winter comin' on." Then he went on to describe our operation—how many saddle and work horses we had, how many cows to milk, horses to feed and shoe, how many acres of native hay we raised, and the number of fields and pastures. "Of course this is a guest ranch. So we cater mainly to guests from back east who come out here to vacation. But that's only in the summer. Work load's lighter this time of year, without the main house and four cabins filled up with wealthy dudes."

FATHER MIGHT HAVE ADDED THAT MONEY WAS IN short supply, too. We had been living well in California and New York, but Father had finally succumbed to his lifelong dream of having a spread of his own. He had been a cowboy in his youth and so was qualified to run a dude outfit. Friends from back east had promised to come out as paying guests; so, in June of 1929 he took the plunge and bought this old, run-down Wyoming ranch with roseate plans to improve and modernize. All as easy as cutting butter. But the 1929 Wall Street crash spelled ruination for all his hopes and dreams. When Henry arrived on our doorstep we were

DRAWN FOR AMERICAN WEST BY VAKA PEREYMA

by Diana Serra Cary

stone-broke, living under the shadow of imminent foreclosure of a ten-thousand-dollar mortgage we hadn't a prayer of meeting. Fortunately Father was a crack shot with his .30-.30, in a region still teeming with wild game. So we always had meat on the table but not a whole lot more.

"What can you pay?" the stranger asked.

"Frankly, not a dime," Father admitted ruefully. "Up 'til now I've been paying thirty dollars and found, but then hard times caught up—" He spread his hands in the universal sign language of the helpless poor.

"I understand," Henry replied, and for the first time I saw his bobcat eyes soften. "I had me a place upriver I was tryin' to homestead, but got starved out and had to hit the road." He poked the pack at his feet with the toe of his boot, and it dawned on me that the bundle represented his entire estate. "But I tell you what, I'd be willing to work just for room and board if you'd let me run traplines on my own time." He kicked the tarp again. "Got all my gear and traps right here."

His gaze ran over our whole place again like a fine-tooth comb. "I'll bet you got a whole lot of beaver you don't need or want down in river-bottom, cottonwood country like this."

"I sure as hell do," Father said, pulling a bag of Bull Durham and papers from his shirt pocket and offering it to his visitor. Accepting it in silence, Henry shook out the tobacco, rolled his smoke, licked the paper, and handed back the "makings." It was ceremonial, like Indians passing the pipe.

"The beaver here multiply like rabbits," Father was saying, "dam up every irrigation ditch, flood the hayfields, and turn pastures into swamp. I'd be obliged if you'd trap all you can find. That goes for skunks, ermine, and bobcats too. They sure raise hell with chickens."

"It's a deal then," Henry said, and anticipating the next question, he answered before Father could ask. "They call me Henry Boone."

So that was how Henry came into our lives. By then we had known every kind of hired man—thieves on the run, ex-convicts, callow useless city-boys who had traded unemployment for riding the rails, and willing but arthritic old widowers who could barely lay a fire with their crippled hands. But Henry was different. We never had a better hired man, before or since.

The cookstove was aglow by sunup when Mother came down each morning to put the skillet on for hotcakes. Both cows had long since been milked, and the cream was already rising in the crocks on the well-screened back porch. In Henry's first three days he had cut and stacked enough firewood to see us through until spring. He broke out beaver dams, cut poles, mended fences that had been down ever since Father bought the place, and thoroughly forked out both the horse and cow barns. Miraculously enough, he still seemed fresh after work and on Sundays, when he headed out to lay his traps or walk the line of those already set.

I loved going with him on these treks, for both my older sister, Louise, and I quickly lost our initial fear of him. We discovered he was more than just a canny trapper. He pos-

sessed a kind of invisible antenna receptive to every trap, that picked up signals when the traps were sprung by quarry. His language was rich with the lore of one who had spent years in the woods, and as he introduced us to the secrets of a trapper's world, he kept up a steady stream of philosophical observations about the ways of animals and men.

GOOD BEAVER PELTS BROUGHT ABOUT FIVE DOLlars each in those days, and the government paid a bounty of two dollars for every pair of coyote ears a hunter brought in. Henry was a wizard with his hunting knife, skinning out a pelt in less time than it takes to tell. To our surprise we discovered he didn't own a rifle. He borrowed one from Father occasionally for hunting bobcat and lynx, which did not lend themselves to trapping. Otherwise he dispatched his catch with a merciful blow on the head. (Once in a while a beaver drowned before Henry got to its trap.) "A gun's more nuisance than not," he opined quietly. "Racket scares away other game after you've made your first kill. But you take my old Green River here—that I made myself from a saw blade and a deer's horn—it lets a man live off the land and nobody the wiser."

He taught us how to peg out skunk hides on a wooden shingle and sink them in the swift current of the river, firmly anchored to something on shore, purifying them of every trace of odor. Skunk grease, he said, was the best waterproofing ever invented. We used it on our boots in the snow, and he was right. Best of all he made us each a miniature version of the wonderful knife he carried.

Within a month of Henry's arrival the rustic walls of the former sheepherder's cabin we let him use were covered with hides, curing or already cured. There was always a Dutch oven bubbling away on top of the Franklin stove, filling the air with a thick rancid odor. This vile concoction, with its tawny collar of fatty foam floating on top, tasted to me like melted saddle soap. But Henry considered it a gourmet dish. "Nothing puts a layer of lard between you and a hard Rocky Mountain winter like a mess of beaver-tail soup," he assured us as he ladled the steaming broth into a bowl.

Henry had been at the ranch nearly three months when Christmas vacation came around. Louise and I attended a one-room log-cabin school some four miles above our place. The teacher was a truly dedicated woman, who drove the thirty-five miles from Laramie two days each week during vacation so that we could work a few hours on the presents the six of us students were making with our own hands for our families. She understood there was no money for gifts.

On the Friday before Christmas our parents drove us to school in the morning and promised to pick us up around four in the afternoon. They were going into Laramie to buy groceries because a bad storm was gathering, and they wanted to get in what few supplies they could afford before it broke.

The other children left school for home at three, and the teacher with her own little girl was anxious to get back to town before dark. We assured her our parents would be along later; so, reluctantly, she agreed to leave us there alone.

Having lived in Beverly Hills mansions and first-class hotels when traveling back east, Louise and I had not yet developed the born-Westerner's instinct for survival. We became so engrossed in the bookends we were hacking out of wood with our scroll saws that we let the fire go out. Only then did we realize how black the sky had grown and how incredibly cold it was. When we decided to build a new fire, we discovered there was only one match. Growing frightened now, Louise very carefully put the flame to the paper and kindling, but a gust of wind coming down the corrugated chimney blew it out.

By eight o'clock that night we were numb with cold, and genuinely afraid. A blizzard was buffeting the tiny cabin as though determined to blow it clear off the prairie. We assumed our parents must be stranded on the highway or trapped in town by the same fearful storm. I remembered the year before when the temperature dropped to fifty degrees below zero. Now it began to dawn on me that we could actually freeze to death before morning.

Suddenly we heard a heavy thumping on the schoolhouse stoop and a frightful banging on the door. "Anybody in there?" someone yelled. Drowsily I thought Father had come for us at last. Then the door flew open and Henry Boone burst in. He carried two heavy sheepskin-lined coats and a flashlight. He was bundled to his eyelashes with a muffler and wore earmuffs and a mountainous sheepskin coat. His clothes were caked with snow.

KINDA BLEW UP A STORM, DIDN'T IT?" HE ASKED chattily, as though he had just stepped out of a taxi on Fifth Avenue instead of being blown in off the wind-lashed Laramie Plains. "Now you gals better get a move on. No time to lose."

"Did our folks get back to the ranch?" I asked as he helped us on with the man-sized coats.

"No, and the telephone line's dead—so if they got caught in town they couldn't let us know. I just figured I'd find you girls holed up gettin' set to freeze to death."

"But Henry," Louise asked fearfully as he opened the door and we started out into the snow, "do you think we can make it back to the ranch in a blizzard as bad as this?"

"You just have to keep moving," he admonished us calmly. "The only animals that winter-kill are the ones that lie down in a storm. We've got the wind at our backs. I had to buck it head-on, comin' up the river. Goin' back should be no problem at all."

Henry slammed his powerful back and shoulders against the wind like a mighty barricade, and with his arms around us he half pushed, half dragged us along. We headed down a ridge toward the river seeking protection from the wind, but if there was any lessening in the force of the blast I certainly couldn't notice it.

"Not so slow," Henry kept shouting at us, "you've got to *run*!" After about a mile and a half at this pace, my lungs were scalded with the frozen air, and my legs felt as though they no longer belonged to me. Henry allowed us to stop just once in those four miles, under the lee of a high ridge where twenty-foot drifts had set up a natural cove. But that lasted only

seconds and he pulled us to our feet again and drove us on. Then I looked up and it seemed the lights of the ranch were dead ahead. The kitchen was warm and cozy when we stumbled in, and the phone was ringing. Henry answered it because neither Louise nor I could speak. It was Father calling frantically to see if we were all right. He had been trying for hours to call us from town, but rural service had only just been restored.

"Are the girls okay?"

"Sitting right here in your nice warm kitchen," Henry assured Father cheerily, with no alarming references to our very close call. "Got home earlier with no problems at all."

It took hours for the three of us to get warm. But Louise and I did not complain. Thanks to Henry we were alive.

The day before Christmas I knocked on Henry's cabin door in tears. There was no one else to whom I could confide the tragic news I had just overheard in a troubled conversation between my parents. "The storekeepers in town won't extend us any more credit," I sobbed, "not even shells for Father's .30-.30. That rifle is all that's kept us going with rabbit and grouse, elk and deer. He planned to go hunting today to bring in a deer for Christmas dinner, but he hasn't got a single shell." Then I broke down and told him the whole terrible story of the foreclosure, how much I loved the ranch and what a killing blow it would be if we should lose it. Henry sat very still, stroking the long guard hairs on a blue beaver pelt spread across his knee.

"Well now, men made out before rifles were invented, girlie," he said slowly. "And as for losin' the ranch, well those things happen. But nobody ever loses anything he's ever put great store by. Take me. Now I had two little girls like you and your sis, once. And I still got 'em—in here." He tapped his forehead and then moved his hand down to his breast.

"I still got my pretty little place too, with its pine trees and grass and a crick runnin' through. It's like I can visit it anytime, inside of me. Nobody can take the best things away. You got to remember, human beings in trouble are a lot like a beaver caught by his leg in a trap. You can bet he don't like chewin' off his own leg just to get free, but if that's what it takes, he'll do it. Does it almost every time. People do it too. They decide they have to cut off something to survive. When that time comes, you have to memorize the things you love, and then you can be sure you'll never really lose them."

IT WAS THE LONGEST SPEECH I HAD EVER HEARD HENRY make, and it made an indelible impression on me. To this day I still have the ranch, inside, thanks to his advice. But advice was one thing, I thought, and venison for Christmas dinner quite another. So I guessed Henry didn't really care, because long before noon on Christmas Eve he said he was going to walk his trapline. That was hardly unusual. The only difference was he didn't ask either Louise or me to go along.

Shortly before sundown our family was sitting around the big stone fireplace in the living room. The room was festooned with pine boughs, and a nine-foot-tall blue spruce stood in one corner, lavishly decorated with costly ornaments dating back to pre-Depression days. The presents Louise and I made at school were gaily gift wrapped and under the tree. Mother had baked corn bread and opened a can of jellied cranberries she had been saving for the occasion. Four, lean, laying hens had been sacrificed for dinner and were simmering with dumplings on the kitchen range.

Suddenly I looked out the window toward the horse corral, and there was Henry coming through the gate, leading the big bay horse Father had cut to him for his own use. As both horse and man drew nearer I realized that "Chub" was carrying a pack, laid across the saddle, wrapped in a canvas tarp. When Henry uncovered his load, we found it was a two-point buck deer.

"But how did you manage to kill a deer without a gun?" my Father wanted to know, as he and Henry strung up the carcass on a singletree in the horse barn for cleaning.

"It wasn't really hard," Henry explained. "They were down by a salt lick, him and four doe. I spotted them from a ridge directly above, dropped down on this one, and my old imitation Green River did the rest."

Father had never in his entire life heard of such an incredibly bold feat, at least not in modern times, but there was no other explanation. The buck had definitely *not* been shot, and Henry was not a man given to either boasts or lies.

Just after New Year's, Father came downstairs from the bedroom as usual, to find the cookstove cold and the milk cows lowing mournfully from the barn. Going over to Henry's cabin he found the door ajar, the walls stripped of pelts and hides, everything gone except the stove and simple furniture it had contained when Henry moved in. On the table he found a note written in a clear hand on yellow, lined, school-tablet paper.

"I'm sorry to leave without good-byes, but I always get a hankerin' to move on at the start of each New Year. I sold all the hides I trapped on your property, and it gave me a nice little grubstake. But I figure you can use half of what they paid me for the lot. After all, they *are* your beaver!" In a small oilskin packet was a stack of twenty-dollar bills.

When Louise and I realized Henry was gone for good, we were desolate. "But couldn't we go after him and ask him to come back to work?" Father shook his head. "I wasn't paying him anything—so he really wasn't working for me anyway," he explained with simple logic.

Standing there with Father on the front steps looking up the lane, I half expected to see Henry Boone's towering figure, the pack on his shoulder, his handmade knife at his side, stalking back down across the cattle guard. Then my thoughts turned to Father. "I'm really sorry," I said, "I mean on your account. Losing Henry means you'll have all the chores to do by yourself again."

"Yes, I know." he sighed. Then placing his hand on my shoulder he grinned and said contentedly, "But you have to admit, we sure had one whale of a hired man for Christmas!"

Diana Serra Cary *has written numerous articles for major national publications and is the author of two books on early Hollywood:* The Hollywood Posse: The Story of a Gallant Band of Men Who Made Movie History *(1975); and* Hollywood's Children: An Inside Account of the Child Star Era *(1979)*

Letters to the Editor

Horsepower

I greatly enjoyed "Horsepower Makes Sense in Montana's Big Hole" (September/October). Teams are still used in Sublette County, Wyoming, particularly for winter feeding. Two weeks ago I watched hay being put up with a Beaverslide on a ranch in the upper Green River Valley near Pinedale. Big Hole is not the only place left using the Beaverslide. Thanks for some good reading.

Judi Myers
Pinedale, Wyoming

The "Horsepower" article by Bryant and Buchanan is outstanding, a real touch of class. I could smell, hear, and feel those draft horses all the way to page 33. I found the other articles in the September/October issue rewarding.

B. W. King
Glendale, California

Your article on haying in the Big Hole, Wisdom, Montana, was thoroughly enjoyed, and I was glad to see that Cynthia Buchanan was from that area.

Herb Armitage and Dade Stephens had the Beaverslide patented so that no manufacturer could make them for a profit. They wanted farmers and ranchers to make them to use. We have a plan for the Beaverslide that Herb sent us. It was referred to many times when we built a Beaverslide to use here on the ranch.

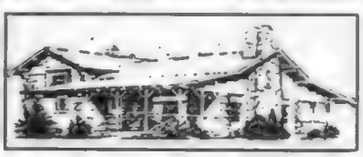
Catherine E. Armitage
Cameron, Montana

A lookout at the top

Your article "A Room at the Top" (Hidden Inns, July/August) was of special interest to me. I was a forest ranger most of thirty-three years with the U.S. Forest Service in Arizona and New Mexico. I am enclosing a photo of one of my early-day lookout towers, taken in 1946. It was on a ridge north of Tajique Guard Cabin (now abandoned), three miles north of the village of Tajique, New Mexico.

Cleo J. Anderson
Cave Creek, Arizona

Practice Makes Perfect



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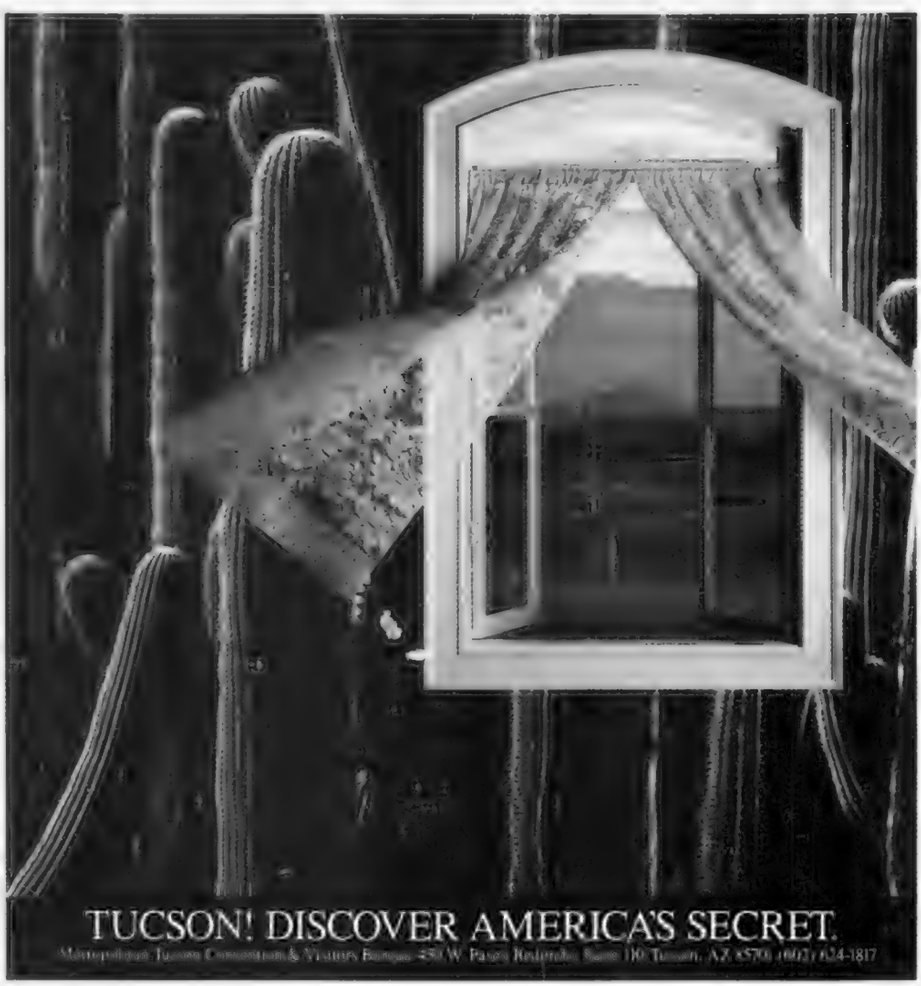

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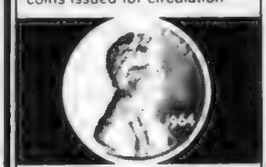

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AW

Pilot Jensen speaks up

I wish to thank you for the article about my friend Leo the flying lion ("When Leo Roared in Arizona Canyon," July/August). It brings back many memories of my hectic flying days. The lion flight was done to advertise the Metro-Golden-Mayer Studios. It must be noted that the local people of Payson, Arizona, were not mentioned; yet, it was they who got the lion out before the studio people arrived with a truck and cage.

Martin Jensen
San Diego, California

AW's new coat

Thank you for the September/October issue. Your enclosing the magazine in a protective wrap is very commendable and enhances the whole appearance. Now, I can receive AMERICAN WEST in fresh, tip-top condition. The days of receiving the magazine in dog-eared, battered condition are thankfully over. In every way you have a first-class production. I am proud to be a subscriber.

Harold H. Watanuki
Salt Lake City, Utah

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I just opened my fancy weather protection on my AMERICAN WEST as it arrived at my desk this morning. That is a great idea. Thanks so much. And then I opened the cover—that spread of Sturm Ruger. If I were younger, I would be tempted to get one.

Then I turned to "View from the West," and that is a truly beautiful editorial. I've just finished rereading it and decided that this was the best way to vent my feeling. I guess what precipitated my feeling is that I am now lying out along a streambed with my grandson, whenever I can, and thinking of how I used to do the same thing with my grandfather back in Ohio many years ago. I've always liked AMERICAN WEST, but now I'm hooked.

Jim Wiant
Estherville, Iowa

A Requiem for Steam

My father worked on the logging trestle on pages 58–59 of "A Requiem for Steam," May/June issue. Thanks for your interest in railroading of the past. I remain a grateful reader.

Donald R. Boyle
Eugene, Oregon

Seldom have so few pages contained so many errors as in "A Requiem for Steam" in your May/June issue. Specifically, Union Pacific #3985 (page 53) was built in 1943, not 1936; the correct corporate title is Chicago & North Western, not Chicago & Northwestern (page 53); it is not possible that "there never were two locomotives alike" in steam (page 54); a Union Pacific "Big Boy" did not meet the locomotive *Pioneer* at the Chicago Railroad Fair (page 55); in no way could a last steam run on the Monon have paused at the Electro-Motive plant in La Grange, which is located west of Chicago and not on the Monon (pages 55 and 58) . . . .

David P. Morgan
Editor, *Trains*
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Rainbow Bridge

It gets real tiresome hearing about the "inaccessibility" of Rainbow Bridge prior to Lake Powell (Lookout, July/August). For those of us who keep float boats rather than "stinkpots," Rainbow Bridge is less accessible now, not more. Everyone who floated Glen Canyon pretty much enjoyed the easy hike to the bridge through a wonderful canyon.

As to the seldom-used land route, it remains the same "difficult slickrock terrain." I have not myself done that route,

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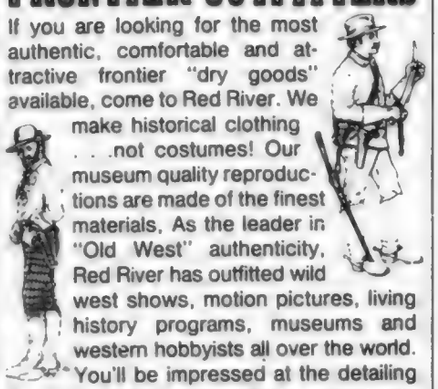

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but my neighbor in Holbrook, Arizona, was proud of the fact that he rode his horse all the way. A route on which you can ride all the way—though I understood from him not every horse or rider could do that—is not, in my book, difficult for hikers.

People who were not lucky enough to float Glen Canyon do not realize what an easy trip it was, with nothing more than a few small riffles in the way of danger.

(Ms.) Dorde W. Woodruff
Salt Lake City, Utah

Mystery of Weisel's "Chevrolet"?

I enjoyed reading "The Mystery of Hans Weisel and the Bar-W" in your September/October issue. However, I wish to take exception to the year of manufacture and trade name of the automobile shown on page 71 and described as a 1924 Chevrolet roadster.

My reasons for disagreement are: (1) This picture shows disc wheels. Up to and including the 1926 models, Chevrolet came equipped with wooden spoke wheels. (2) The long extended hubs are not Chevrolet. Packard, Studebaker, and a few other manufacturers used this type of hub during this era. (3) The louvers on the engine hood are not, to my remembrance, of Chevrolet design. Nor did Chevy ever have a battery box mounted above the running board and accessible from the outside of the car as shown where the left rear fender attaches to the running board. (4) The length of the hood between the windshield and the radiator cap shows the pictured car to be a six-cylindered auto. While the radiator shell looks quite similar to a 1929 or 1930 Chevrolet, the pictured car cannot be a 1924 model Chevrolet because Chevy did not come out with this style of body until the "six" was introduced with the 1929 model.

In conclusion, I don't believe this car to be a Chevrolet at all, and most certainly not a 1924 model, if it *is* a Chevy. I believe it to be (although the length of the body is a bit short behind the folded-down top and the rumble seat compartment) a 1929 or 1930–31 Studebaker small six or possibly a Jewett six of approximately the same years of manufacture.

K. Arthur Fox
Chico, California

Pawnee Bill poster

I was interested to see a historical poster on page 76 of the July/August issue (Western Lore). Although it is difficult to see from your picture just what the entire poster looks like, if you will refer to Plate 8, between pages

122–123 of the new book *Billers, Banners and Bombast* by Chappy Fox and Tom Parkinson of the Circus World Museum in Baraboo, Wisconsin, you will see an even larger poster. It is composed of some hundred or so smaller pieces that can be arranged into various sized posters according to the space available.

The Pawnee Bill poster is probably made up of several smaller posters strung together to fill the space available, and what a sight it must have been. The poster is obviously by Stockbridge, the best and most famous lithographers of circus and other posters. I wish that you could have published a full picture of it so we could all see the beautiful lithography and art work that went into these treasures.

Sonia B. Brown
Carson, California

Custer again

Jim Robbins ("A New Look at Custer's Last Stand," July/August) misses an important point when he says that the Indians "ignored" a government order to move to the Dakota reservations. Many Sioux bands never received the order, and those that did had every right to ignore it; it was an illegal order that violated existing treaties. Two Moons, mentioned by Robbins, was a Cheyenne and not affected by the order, which referred only to the Sioux. But Two Moons's village was attacked on the Powder on March 17, 1876, by six companies led by Colonel Joseph J. Reynolds, part of a larger force commanded by General George Crook. This attack convinced the Cheyenne to join with the Sioux in opposing any further cession of land; it also alarmed and enraged the Sioux.

All the free bands traded throughout the spring for arms and ammunition, and the news of this renewed defiant spirit drew many Indians from the reservations to the summer gathering. In my novel *The Snowblind Moon*, which covers the period of March–June 1876, I took pains to relate these events accurately so my readers would see how Crook's March campaign and Reynolds's attack on Two Moons played a crucial role in creating the very conditions that led to Custer's defeat at Little Big Horn.

John Byrne Cooke
Teton Village, Wyoming

I see no valid reason for your kind response to the letter [on page 14 of the September/October issue regarding names on the Custer battlefield monument]. When we put up monuments to our war dead, there is no cause to place the names of enemy dead thereon. We

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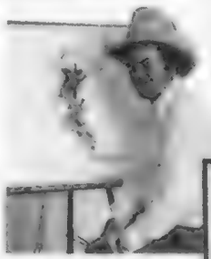

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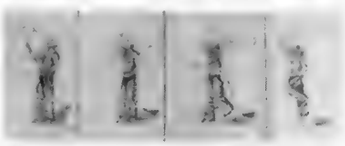

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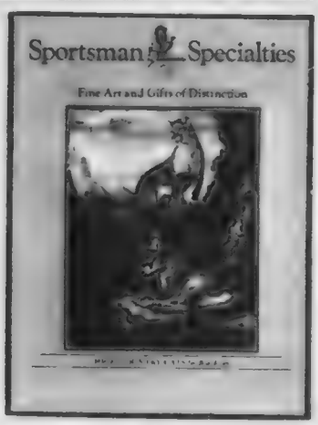

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have monuments to our dead from WW II, but German and Japanese military personnel are not listed on them. Custer was fighting the enemies of his and our nation; the monument to him and to his soldiers is precisely that—a monument to Custer and his soldiers, not to the enemy's dead. Your caption has nothing to do with racism.

R. G. Schipf
Missoula, Montana

Levi's

Just want you to know how much I enjoyed your story on Levi Strauss (July/August). I have worked for them on and off for nineteen years and enjoyed every day of it.

They'll be moving [from Amarillo] to San Antonio on September 20, 1985. Then, I'll retire and really be looking forward to every issue of yours. Thanks.

Donna Parkhill
Amarillo, Texas

Donkey engine

In regard to Mary Tomich's letter in your July/August issue, page 58, the "donkey engine" used by loggers was not a locomotive but a stationary engine used by loggers more for moving and lifting logs in the forest. It was a steam engine hooked up to a system of spools (pulleys) and cable which was looped around the log and pulled to the sawing or loading point. The donkey engine has been called the biggest single improvement in the logging industry. It was invented in 1881 by John Dolbeer of Eureka, California, who also invented the band saw, among many other innovations that improved lumber production.

Dorothy A. Chinn
Fort Lauderdale, Florida

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Western Art Notes

PENCIL DRAWING FOR *SAND* (1929) COURTESY MR. AND MRS. A. P. HAYS

Will James: The Spirit of the Cowboy

In an essay on the art of Will James, A. P. Hays quotes the artist's response to a question about getting models for his drawings of bucking horses: "I get my models through my tailbone, and from the many connections it got with the cantleboard of my saddle."

Though Will James was widely acclaimed during the twenties and thirties, with a following of millions of children and adults, today his name is little known. Artist, writer, and cowboy of the first degree, James, it would seem, was an incorrigible fabricator—a great romantic constructing with the brick and mortar of realism. From his tumultuous early careers as drifting cowboy and bronc buster to his "autobiographical hoax" in *Lone Cowboy*, James created a personal history that rivaled any piece of fiction in intensity. That fervor—as well as his love of horses—emerged in his action-packed drawings and paintings, while his books and stories recount, as no mere observer could, the nitty-gritty of life on the range.

Will James's life, his art, and his writing have been skillfully pulled together in an exhibit and catalogue organized by the Nicolaysen Art Museum in Casper, Wyoming, and guest-curated by A. P. Hays. Drawings and paintings in various media (the bulk in pencil or pen and ink), illustrated letters, and books for the show—including the dramatic pencil drawing above of "cutting out" a steer—were gathered from major art museums and private collections across the West. The catalogue contains informative essays by William Gardner Bell, Jane Nelson, and A. P. Hays and is packed with background on the *real* life of Will James, on his writing and his art. "Will James: The Spirit of the Cowboy" will show at the Scottsdale Center for the Arts in Scottsdale, Arizona, through November 17. December 2–31 the exhibit can be seen at the Sierra Nevada Museum of Art in Reno, Nevada, following which it will travel to Laramie, Wyoming, and Billings, Montana. (For more on the life and works of Will James, see "Will James: Inevitable Cowboy" by William Gardner Bell, AMERICAN WEST, January/February 1983.)

In the American West: Photographs by Richard Avedon chronicles "the men and women, often ignored and overlooked, who work at hard, uncelebrated jobs" with the special perspective of contemporary photographer Richard Avedon. Commissioned by

the Amon Carter Museum of Art in Fort Worth, Avedon spent five years traveling through the West, visiting small towns, threshing bees, rodeos, mining camps and the like—capturing over 750 Westerners before a stark white screen with his 8 x 10 Deardorf camera. One hundred oversized portraits—many of them larger than life—will hang at the Amon Carter Museum through November 17. The show will then travel, making stops at the Corcoran Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C., the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, the Art Institute of Chicago, and the Phoenix Art Museum during 1986.

Lady from Anadarko. The Native American Arts Program at the Museum of the American Indian in New York City presents Kiowa women's dance regalia by Paukeigope, granddaughter of famed Kiowa artist Stephen Mopope. Featuring a traditional Kiowa deer-hide dress with "elk teeth" and a fancy beaded hide dress with leggings, as well as many elaborately decorated accessories, the work of Paukeigope will remain on display through December 29.

Jackson prints rediscovered. After William H. Jackson had established his reputation as one of the best scenic photographers of the nineteenth century, he worked with the Detroit Publishing Company and, later, Photochrom Company making hundreds of thousands of color prints of his photographic images. Grand views like those of the Ruby Castles in Utah, the Mount of the Holy Cross, and Mammoth Hot Springs were reproduced on prints and postcards by an early color process in reportedly grainless, soft and striking hues.

Much of this inventory was acquired by Jack Haynes, who owned concessions in Yellowstone National Park and sold the postcards to tourists during the first half of this century. Long ago relegated to storage, the remainder of these pictures were rediscovered recently when Mrs. Haynes cleaned out old stock. The huge inventory has been passed on to Gregory Franzwa, who is now marketing the historic prints once again. Many of the original 9" x 7" prints are being sold in the Missouri Historical Society's museum shop in St. Louis.

Thomas Moran in Yellowstone. Nineteen magnificent watercolors from the Thomas Gilcrease Museum in Tulsa, which have not traveled in many years, are among the Moran works featured at the Museum of Western Art in Denver, Colorado, through January 6.

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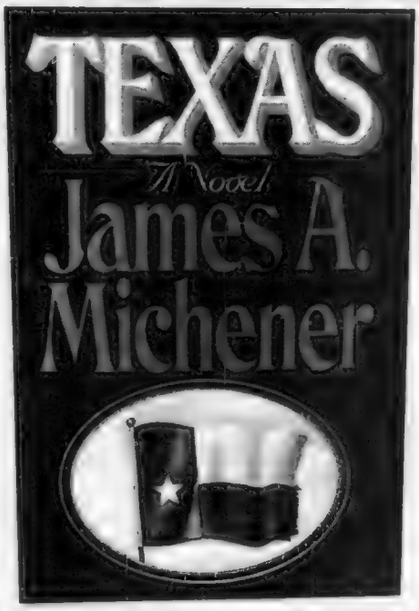

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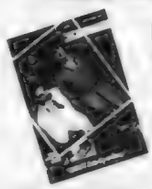

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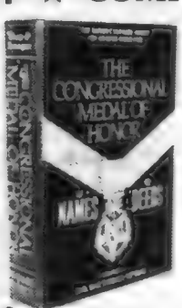

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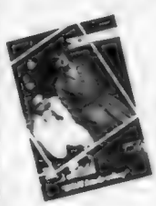

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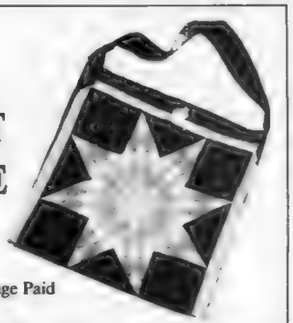

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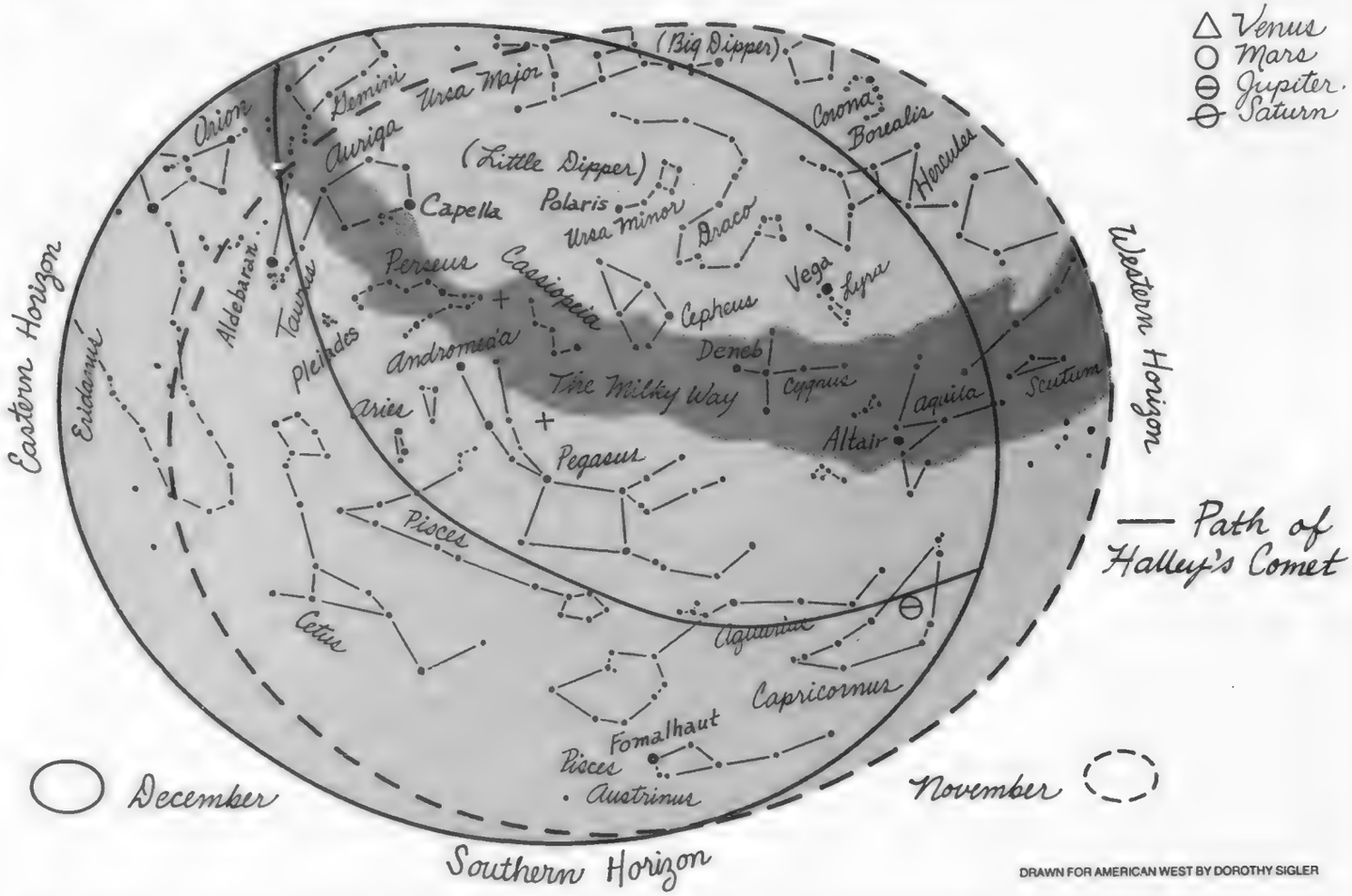


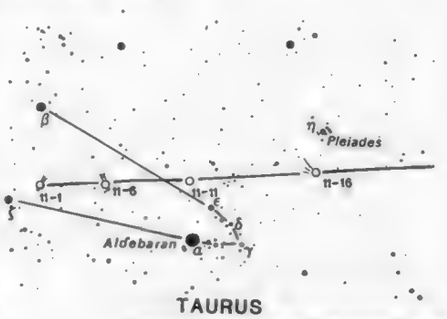
DRAWN FOR AMERICAN WEST BY DOROTHY SIGLER

Taurus—the Key to Halley's Comet

by O. Richard Norton

November is the month when Halley's Comet becomes visible with a pair of binoculars. Throughout the summer and into fall the famous comet has gained in altitude, passing from Orion into Taurus. The comet was rediscovered in 1982 as an exceedingly faint, frozen object in Canis Minor. Ever since that time, it has been carefully watched for developments as it has moved sunward. Never before have we recovered a periodic comet so far from the sun. Halley's Comet will be observed intensely by every physical means and by literally millions of people throughout the world as it approaches its rendezvous with the earth and sun early next year. From November onward, you can join the ranks of the comet watchers. I'll show you how.

All during the months of November and December you will need your binoculars to find the comet and follow its progress through the stars of fall and winter. Now your study of the constellations will bear fruit; it is your road map to Halley's path. Once you have found the comet among the stars, you should be able to follow it as it moves from the autumn to the winter skies, moving ever closer to the sun. Now let's look at the star map. Superimposed over the map is the path of Halley's Comet. We show it beginning high in the sky in Taurus. This is the farthest northern point it will reach, which is nearly overhead for mid-northern-latitude observers. Throughout the month of November it will proceed slowly westward through Taurus. By the first of December it passes just south of Aries and into the faint constellation of Pisces. Notice that it is following the zodiac rather closely. Now its path takes a southward plunge, passing south of Pegasus by mid-December and on into Aquarius by year's end. Since its final southern destination lies below the Scorpion, people situated in the extreme southern latitudes in the continental United States will have the best view in early spring of 1986. In a future issue of AMERICAN WEST, I expect to feature Halley's Comet and give you details of when, where, and how to see it.



TAURUS

DRAWN FOR AMERICAN WEST BY DOROTHY SIGLER

Our love affair with Halley's Comet begins with Taurus. Look at the expanded sketch of Taurus. Notice that besides the general

shape depicting the V-shaped face and long horns of the celestial bull, I have included that segment of Halley's path through Taurus. Notice that the comet passes through the horns the first week of November and just beneath (south of) the *Pleiades* on November 16. This is by far the best opportunity to find the comet. At that time it will still be below naked-eye visibility, and binoculars will be needed to see it. Fortunately, there will be no moon to interfere with your observations on that night. First find the *Pleiades* in the binoculars. With 7 X 50 or 7 X 35 binoculars, you should be able to see the entire dipper-shaped cluster of stars. While facing south, slowly lower the binoculars. The *Pleiades* will appear to drift upward (northward) in the binocular field. As they drift out of the field, Halley's Comet will drift into the field from below (south). The comet will appear as a fuzzy, white ball. A tail will probably not have formed yet. Once you have found the comet, you now have an opportunity to watch it move westward among the stars. Since it will be moving an average of 3° westward every day (6 moon diameters) and the field of view of your binoculars is probably a little more than 7° or twice Halley's average daily motion, you should be able to find it in nearly the same location every two consecutive nights. So once you have found it, you can follow it nightly. Halley has been known to brighten suddenly on the inbound side of its orbit; so, nightly scrutiny may be rewarded with interesting changes. By the end of December it is possible that a tail will begin to form as the comet approaches the sun. Certainly by mid-January a tail should become obvious, and we should be able to spot it with the naked eye low in the west after sunset, but that's a story for later. I'd be delighted to receive letters from any of our readers who spot Halley using the above instructions.

Now let's return to Taurus. I've briefly mentioned the *Pleiades* cluster. I talked about this beautiful cluster of stars in the January/February 1985 issue. You may wish to refer back to that issue. Suffice it to say that in binoculars you will be richly rewarded with hundreds of stars composing a loose, open cluster of stars only 410 light years away—close, by galactic distance standards. The V-shaped head of Taurus is also a loose cluster of stars called the *Hyades*, some four times closer to us than the *Pleiades*. The bright orange star *Aldebaran* seems to be among the *Hyades*, but actually it is not. It is between us and the *Hyades*, being seventy light years closer to us than the cluster.

There is one other famous object in Taurus that you cannot see with binoculars, but it plays such an important role in modern astronomy that I must include it. It is the Crab Nebula located just south of the southern horn of Taurus. It is the nebulous supernova remnant from a star that violently exploded in A.D. 1054. Chinese observers noted that the new star rapidly increased in brightness until it rivaled the planet Venus and could be seen in the daytime. It remained visible for two years before fading to obscurity. That remnant is still expanding from the initial explosion while the very core of the star remains in the center as a dense neutron star pulsing in brightness thirty times every second, the fastest of the known pulsars.

Of the planets, only the giant Jupiter remains visible in the early evening sky during November and December. It is a bright conspicuous object in Capricorn. By the end of December it will be only about 20° west of Halley's Comet, and the distance between the two will close rapidly through January. Saturn is behind the sun and cannot be seen while Mars and Venus are morning objects and are thus not included in the map.

REMEMBER: HALLEY RHYMES WITH VALLEY!

O. Richard Norton is director of the Flandrau Planetarium at the University of Arizona.

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AUTHOR WITH COOKING PAUNCH

Bent's Fort Winter Quarters

by Sam Arnold

It was a zinger of a first night! As we placed our buffalo robe and Rio Grande blankets on the floor of William Bent's room at Bent's Old Fort in Colorado, it all seemed like an easy adventure. It should be a great lark to go back in time to March 1846. We were joining a group of twenty-two young men and women, a mix of interpretive historians and buckskinners for the annual three-day National Park Service "Bent's Fort Winter Quarters" experience.

The huge adobe "castle on the prairie" was originally built about 1834 by the Bent brothers of St. Louis and their trading partner, Ceran St. Vrain, on the north bank of the Arkansas River near present-day La Junta. Comparable to Fort Laramie on the Oregon Trail, Bent's Fort on the Santa Fe Trail served as the hub of a vast fur-trade empire and freighting business in the New Mexico region. One hundred and twenty-seven years after its destruction in 1849, Bent's Old Fort rose again like a phoenix in 1976. Western historians across the nation cheered when the National Park Service spent several million dollars rebuilding the fort from bare ground during the bicentennial year. Sometimes termed the "Sturbridge Village of the West," this famed mud-and-straw-brick citadel stands proud some 160 miles southeast of Denver, near the town of La Junta.

March in Colorado is not summery. Through our first night at the fort, a cold prairie wind blew through cracks in the doorway over my wife and me. Carrie and I huddled together to stay warm beneath our Rio Grande blankets, thanking heaven for the "silk" grade, very thick buffalo robe that we laid as a mattress on the floor. Morning crept slowly upon us, to the mooing of the milk cow. At 6:00 A.M. the watchtower bell announced the beginning of the day. Shivering in the cold, we donned our 1846-style clothes.

Under the supervision of Park Service staffers, participants were divided into three groups: hunters, trappers, and outfitters; tradesmen; and domestics. Some of the men participants, assigned to be "tradesmen," learned blacksmith skills, while others in the carpenter's shop learned to make wagon spokes with a drawknife. The "trappers" learned to set and bait their traps with castoreum (beaver sex scent). Black-powder rifle repair, horse and mule packing, sinew-sewing, wagon wheel repair, and other nineteenth century frontier skills were learned and practiced.

Our instructions were to report to a "Captain Train," who was in charge of the fort while the owner "Mr. Bent" was away. In a room by the suttler's store we found him and his assistants seated at table, listening to the sad stories of the newcomers. Wearing a blue military-style cap and jacket, the steely eyed, mustachioed martinet glared at each of us. We were urged to "sign with the Bent, St. Vrain Company" and to agree to various conditions for "employment and to submit to whatever disciplines The Company might mete out."

Hinting broadly that I could use my culinary skills to bring his fort a new level of food quality, I begged a position with the "domestics" in the kitchen. Wife Carrie, I assured the skeptical captain, would also assist in the domestic chores in exchange for her "found" (room and board).

Now to inspect the kitchen. A great, stone, open fireplace dominated the kitchen area. There were two work tables, a waterbarrel with gourd, several dull knives (Russell Green Rivers), an axe, and round birch boxes of various spices used at that time. An adjacent cellar boasted hanging hams, bacons, and barrels of staples such as rice, pinto and red beans, pilot bread, pearl barley, green coffee, and more. The blacksmiths here had made a crane from which the cooks swing the coffee pot, the griddle, or the fat, cast teapot over the blazing fire. Pots and Dutch ovens on spiders served as bakers, roasters, and boilers.

Clouds of smoke regularly filled the kitchen, and there was too little light, enough only when the outer doors were open. With doors open, the smoke departed, and light came in. But the bitter winter winds made that choice a hard one.

Eight domestics, including Carrie and me, prepared two meals a day—breakfast at 10:00 A.M. and dinner at 3:00 P.M. We soon discovered that the talked-about evening supper was simply too much for everyone. It was enough just to milk the cow, strain the milk, churn the butter, carry the wood and water, make the candles, kill and pluck the chickens, mix and knead the bread, pat the tortillas, grind the chilis, cut the meat, wash the multitude of dishes and glasses, stoke the horno (beehive oven), and bake the bread and roasts. We were exhausted providing food daily for twenty-five persons.

One of the Park Service men used his rifle to dispatch an eleven-month-old buffalo cow that had been raised at the fort for this occasion. Like a swarm of bees, the trappers took turns at trying their skinning skills. Working on the elevated carcass, they took special care to keep the paunch intact so that I could use it for a cooking demonstration the next day.

Sometime long after Saturday midnight, we were wakened by musket shots, shouting, and an Indian-attack alarm. The episode was very realistic, and you wondered how Bent had felt with some 6,000 Cheyenne lodges just outside these walls. It was determined that a guard had been sleeping at the time of our "attack." Next day, the miscreant had to carry a sack of sand on his shoulders, and run double-time barefooted around the courtyard ten times, as punishment for his crime.

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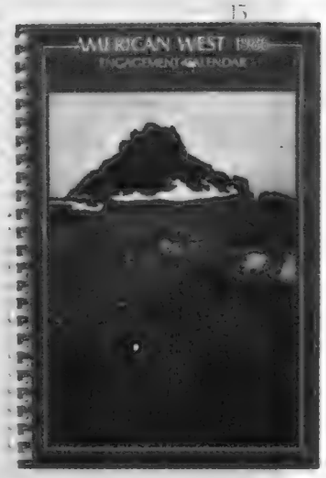

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For a special Sunday dinner we started with "hailstorms," which are 1840-style mint juleps famous at Bent's Fort, pickled oysters, and fresh buffalo tongue in vinaigrette sauce. Next came buffalo-paunch-cooked beaver-tail soup. This broth was cooked in the suspended buffalo stomach by dropping red-hot rocks into the paunch. As a main course, we served horno-roasted haunch of fresh buffalo, with posole corn and red chili. Wines were homemade chokecherry and French Médoc red Bordeaux. Dessert was hot "trapper's fruit"—a delicious, sweet, dried apple and apricot compote served with cream and a little Jamaica rum.

After Sunday dinner, in a special upstairs bar and billiard room, some of the men played a game called "poke" while others took turns with the cues. (The fort's oversized, 1840-period, slate billiard table had also served many weary travelers as a bed.) I picked away at my mandolin, and songs such as "Shenandoah," "Joe Bowers," and "Jeannie with the Light Brown Hair" kept coming out of my fingers. We finished a bottle of 1847 Madeira, a memorable moment for all sharing it, as we knew that these very grapes were growing when Bent's Fort was in full flower in 1847. What a treat!

"Winter Quarters" continued for three days. When the time came to leave, it felt peculiar to don our twentieth century clothing. They felt like jokes of clothes, light and insubstantial. Carrie felt silly in her turtleneck sweater and pants.

In our living-history experience, we discovered that anyone can dress up in a period costume, but it takes at least three days of wearing it in a Western fort to get the feel of the life our ancestors knew. Anyone can chop and carry wood. But when you really need it for the fires to warm and cook the food for twenty-five people, the chopping becomes important. We also came to know how our forebears endured cold, smoke, dirt, blood, and hard work. Even so, the warmth of human interaction, friendships formed, and the pride of "pullin' yer weight" made it one of the most memorable times of our lives.

Information about future living-history activities at Bent's Fort may be obtained by writing Bent's Old Fort National Historic Site, 35110 Hwy. 194 East, La Junta, Colorado 81050.

Sam Arnold *is a food historian, specializing in foods of the American West and the Hispanic West. His cookbook* Frying Pans West *was published after a PBS television series. Now in its eleventh printing, the cookbook can be purchased for $6.95 plus $1.00 postage from Mr. Arnold at 2221 South Gillmore, Denver, Colorado 80210.*

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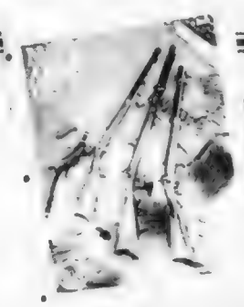

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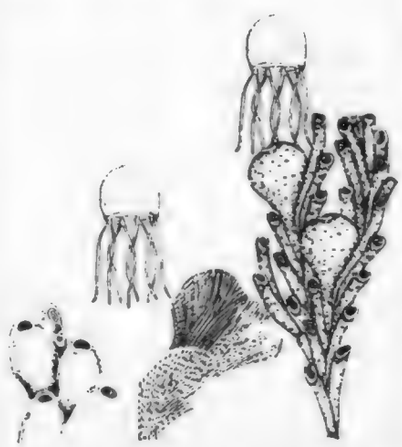

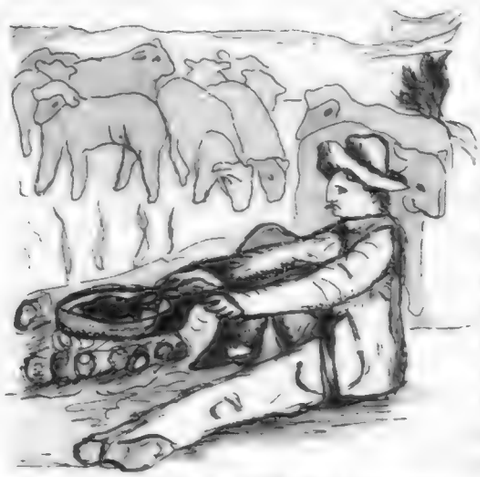

DRAWN FOR AMERICAN WEST BY VAKA PEREYMA

Basque Sheepherders' Savory Cooking

by Barbara Blackburn

Although some old chuck-wagon cowboys might not agree, Basque sheepherders were good cooks, too. This colorful ethnic group of immigrants, originally from the Spanish and French Pyrenees, has its own dances, games, music, and cuisine. The distinctively flavored Basque food is enjoyed throughout the West, especially in Nevada, Idaho, Wyoming, and California.

Chilindron sauce, a Basque specialty, lies at the heart of their cuisine. In this sauce, tomatos, onions, garlic, serrano ham, and roasted peppers cook together until they are indistinguishably mixed. When chorizo sausage is added, the combination resembles a classic paella of Spain. *Chilindron* sauce gives verve to chicken, lamb, rabbit, kid, and veal with a fresh pungency that appears to grow from the meat itself rather than from something ladled onto it when it is done. Even the steam rising from the sauce has the sweet smell of meat and not just of sauce. No distinction is made between sauce and gravy; they are one and the same.

To mop up the remains of this tasty sauce, Basques use a thick-crusted light bread. For a crunchy treat, they take pieces of bread that have been soaked overnight in a wet cloth and drop them in hot oil, browning them with bits of garlic and ham. These cubes of bread, which look like croutons, are called *migos*. Basques love them not only with sauce, but with grapes, eggplant, and chocolate, too.

Salted cod has long been the basis of a famous Basque dish cooked in an earthenware pot, with white wine and lots of garlic and olive oil. Shepherds tending flocks near streams use fresh fish. A most popular catch is trout, which they roast on a grill over fires of rosemary and thyme branches. To fry the trout, Basques rub a heated frying pan with the fat from chunks of ham carried in their knapsacks. They then throw a whole trout in the pan and cook it until done, the only seasoning being the salt from the ham fat and the essence of the herbal branches. Bits of ham are scooped up from the fat and placed on top of the trout.

When a Basque shepherd has more time for his trout, he marinades it in wine, with peppercorns, mint, thyme, bay, mountain rosemary, onions, and other aromatic herbs that he can gather from the surrounding area. The trout is then poached in the marinade. The herbs in the wine add a sparkling sweetness to the mountain trout.

Basques apply their kitchen wizardry to other seafood as well. After pouring *chilindron* sauce over a crab, they flame it in brandy for a spirited dish, and who but a Basque would sprinkle a baby eel with tobacco to relieve the stickiness? Hake, similar to the Atlantic cod, is cooked in a green sauce made from peas, parsley, and garlic. A test of a good chef is to make a casserole of hake, featuring the long, translucent, gelatinous part that is cut from the throat of the fish. Little seasoning is used—just the basics.

A *pipérade* demonstrates the winning way Basques have with eggs. Their favorite ingredients—onions, tomatos, peppers, and herbs—are cooked with gently scrambled eggs in lard or bacon fat. A yummy potato-and-egg entree that originated in Idaho is Basque sheepherders' potatos. Also in Idaho, the meat packers of Payette turn out a spicy sausage known as chorizo, which goes well with these two egg dishes.

In Nevada, near Gardnerville, Basque food can be found at a famous sheepherders' bar and hotel, the J & T. This Gardnerville landmark was built more than a hundred years ago in Virginia City, fifty-three miles north of its present location. The building was hauled down the mountain to Genoa, Nevada, at the turn of the century, and then after a few years was finally moved to Gardnerville.

Today, although they were once enemies, both cowboys and sheepherders hang their hats in the J & T saloon. When sheepmen enter this Basque bar, they announce their arrival by ringing a sheep bell that hangs on the wall. Cowmen, on the other hand, ring a cowbell. Both groups enjoy the delectable food served there. Despite former feelings, cowboys have to admit upon tasting Basque cooking that sheepherders really are good cooks.

Chilindron Sauce

Heat 2 tbl. olive oil. Add 1 roasted small green or red hot pepper, skinned, seeded, and diced; ½ c. chopped onions; and 1 tbl. minced garlic. Stir until lightly browned. Add ½ c. strong-flavored ham; 2½ lb. tomatos, peeled and chopped; 1 can (10½ oz.) tomato purée; ½ tsp. pepper; 1 dried bay leaf, crumbled; 1 tsp. basil; and 1 tsp. oregano. Simmer for about 55 minutes. Makes about 5 cups. Refrigerate unused sauce in a covered jar.

Pipérade

Melt ⅓ c. lard or bacon fat in a heavy skillet. Cook 4 med. onions, peeled and sliced, over low heat for 5 to 10 minutes. Add 4 med. tomatos, peeled and coarsely chopped; 3 to 5 green bell peppers, sliced; ¼ tsp. thyme; and pepper to taste. Cover and cook over low heat stirring frequently for about 15 minutes, or until the vegetables are mushy. Pour 6 to 8 beaten eggs into the vegetables and scramble gently with a fork until the eggs are set. Serve soft and hot, with some simmered chorizo sausage. Yields 6 to 8 servings.

Barbara Blackburn *is the author of an Old West Cookbook published by Evans Publications, Oklahoma. She teaches cooking in her hometown of Williamsville, New York.*

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Fall Hunting Trips

by Erwin and Peggy Bauer

Daybreak is only a pale lemon glow in the east when we park the pickup and follow our guide Lew Martindale across a frosty stubble field in southern Idaho. A raw wind blows and we try to retreat deeper into heavy parkas until the brisk hike warms us. The Snake River is a mercury ribbon in the distance as we aim toward a low ridge in the river's direction. We carry a shotgun apiece, a burlap sack of papier-mâché goose decoys, and one shovel. Lew stops when we reach the crest of the ridge.

"We'll dig our blind about here," he says.

For the next few minutes we excavate a trench about three feet deep, long and wide enough to shelter three upholstered humans crouched down low. Underneath its frozen crust the dark earth is soft. When the digging is finished and Lew is setting up the decoys just downwind of the blind, we notice the beginning of an exquisite sunrise. A camera is produced from a parka pocket, and we shoot the spectacle, taking some shots with Lew silhouetted against the glowing background. We stop suddenly and retreat into the trench when we hear the Klaxon call of Canada geese becoming louder in the distance.

What follows the rest of that cold morning is a traditional rite of autumn in America. During the hour or two after sunup, we watch hundreds—no, thousands—of honkers flying in neat formation from resting areas on the Minidoka National Wildlife Refuge to widespread feeding areas on the Idaho plain, a stupendous sight that makes pulses pound. Some vees pass tantalizingly close to us and even seem headed toward our decoys but at the last moment flare away out of gun range.

We shoot only two birds for the three of us, enough for a delicious roast-goose dinner later on. But the color slides we also shoot will remind us of this memorable morning long after the meal is forgotten.

Any kind of hunting trip anywhere is a splendid opportunity for photography, whether the gunning is good or not. Hunting transports a person outdoors into the most beautiful environments at the most glorious time of year, especially in the American West. Many Westerners live fourteen days a week during the open season. No wonder most fall hunting trips beg to be captured on film.

We do not normally carry much photo equipment. It isn't convenient when burdened with a firearm and ammunition. Usually one 35mm camera with its standard 50mm lens is the limit, but a 35–80mm zoom lens (or some equivalent) is a little more flexible than the 50mm. Because film is so light, we stuff extra rolls of it in every available pocket. The camera and lens are carried in a side or game pocket protected by a Zip-Lock plastic bag, rather than hung around the neck.

Every aspect of hunting is photographable, with hunting buddies and guides heading the list. Here may be the best chance to shoot friends when they are happiest and most relaxed, far away from telephones, children, and computer readouts. Of all the pictures and portraits ever taken of him, old sportsman Teddy Roosevelt always preferred a candid one snapped in a Colorado hunting camp, showing him in field clothing.

Pictures of people can be taken anytime—when they are stalking or bugling at a bull elk or taking a break during the doldrums of noon. Posed pictures are good, but natural unposed ones may be a lot better. For example, portray a fellow hunter congratulating his soaking-wet Labrador for a fine job of

retrieving, or the friend who is a little afraid of his horse, trying to saddle the animal, or someone sitting on the rim of a canyon, glassing the strange landscape for a mule buck below. All of these shots can make any picture album more priceless as time passes.

Hunting camps are ideal settings to break out a camera. For one thing, the mood in most camps is usually upbeat. The doctor who is aloof in starched white medical garb is suddenly just one of the gang who needs a shave. The man who never thought of frying an egg at home draws the short straw and becomes the camp cook, as well as a humorous subject. A flash unit comes in handy around hunting camps; we try to find a place in our duffel to carry one.

Except that the pickup has too often replaced the hiker or the horseman, big-game hunting has changed little since the earliest mountain men hunted for survival instead of high adventure. Many pictures we have made of hunting cabins or tents pitched in the backcountry look like scenes from a century or more ago. Unless you look closely at details of a horse's tack, the picture you shoot of a hunting pack-string fording a Rocky Mountain river this September could also resemble a page out of the past.

Among the pictures in our files is a yellowed print of a bearded hunter standing beside an old wagon which is piled high with grizzly bear skins and the trophy antlers of many elk. Someone wrote in a shaky hand on the back: "Near Yellowstone 1884." Such a picture would be impossible today, because neither bruins nor elk exist in such numbers, and game laws regulate their harvest. In any case, most viewers nowadays consider pictures of huge bags to be gross. But there is no reason whatsoever that a hunter who has legally taken a fine antelope or deer in fair chase should not have his picture taken with it.

Some trophy pictures are composed in much better taste than others. Consider a picture of the hunter lashing bull-elk antlers onto a packhorse rather than a picture of him sitting on the carcass. Avoid shooting a trophy in a grotesque position, or with a limp tongue hanging out of its mouth. A trophy photographed in attractive natural surroundings is preferable to one shown lying in the bed of a pickup truck or hanging from a rack.

More and more in recent years we have given up hunting, but not hunting trips. Trophy pictures for our files have now become the target, more satisfying than the Texas whitetail and the Wyoming wapiti hanging on our wall.

Erwin and Peggy Bauer *are the authors of* Photographing Wild Texas, *recently published by the University of Texas Press, Austin.*

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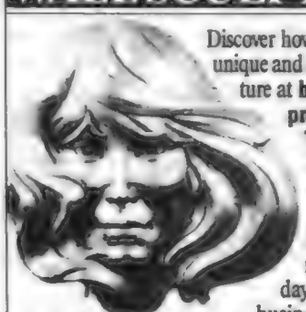

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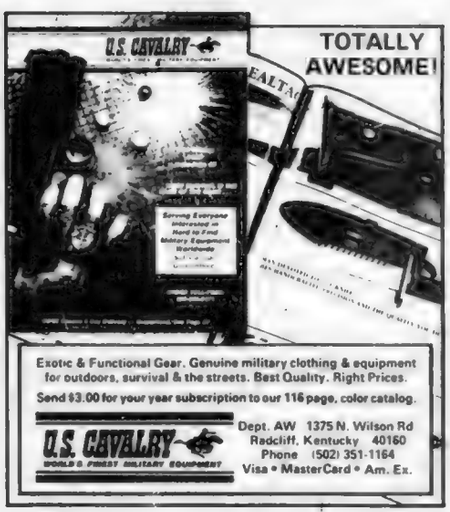
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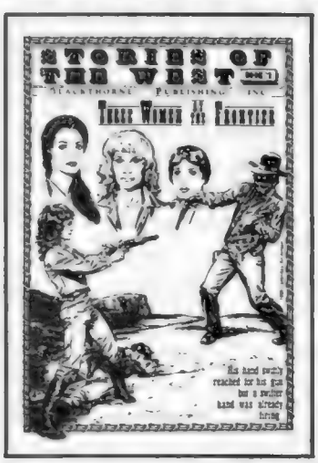

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Western Books in Brief

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Meeting the Expectations of the Land: Essays in Sustainable Agriculture and Stewardship, *ed. by Wes Jackson, Wendell Berry, and Bruce Colman (North Point Press, Berkeley, 1985; 272 pp., notes, cloth $25.00, paper $12.50).*

The authors of these seventeen essays on sustainable agriculture hope to strike a responsive chord and awaken others to the necessity of meeting the soil's needs as well as people's demands. Written by farmers and scientists, historians and economists, each segment explores different aspects of agricultural problems that arise when land is viewed solely as an economic resource. In this timely book the authors propose alternative methods of farming that would work to prevent present difficulties like soil erosion and improper water management.

The Silent Language of the Plains: How To Speak Indian Sign Language *by Tim McCoy, directed by Terry McCoy (Harper & Wasson Publications, Inc., Video Books [P.O. Box 3877, Kingman, Arizona 86402], 1984; 106 pp., 2 hours long, $49.95 plus $3.50 postage and handling).*

In this fascinating video book, Tim McCoy displays his vast knowledge of Plains Indian sign language and culture as he clearly demonstrates the signs for hundreds of objects, animals, actions, and opinions. As a working cowboy near the Wind River Reservation in Wyoming in the early 1900s, McCoy needed a way to communicate with the Shoshone and Arapaho Indians that he encountered; so, he mastered Indian sign language. McCoy entertains as he educates, providing an amazing wealth of information about Indian lore and American history.

Adventures On & Off Interstate 80: Natural and human history along the pioneer and gold rush corridor from San Francisco's Pacific shore to Nevada's desert sands *by Eleanor Huggins and John Olmsted (Tioga Publishing Company, Palo Alto, California, 1985; 273 pp., illus., maps, index, biblio., paper $12.95).*

Travel through history while winding along Interstate 80 from San Francisco's Fort Funston to the edge of the Forty-Mile Desert near Lovelock, Nevada, with this excellent road-

side companion. A "favorite diversion" section guides visitors to historic sites like the John Muir Home in Martinez and Sutter's Fort in Sacramento, while other sections give an overview of the natural history of each area and of the pioneers and explorers who once passed this way. Selections from the writings of early California and Nevada residents and visitors like Mark Twain's hilarious "Earthquake Almanac" convey the charm and the sometimes harsh nature of the land.

Frontier Spirit: Catalog of the Collection of the Museum of Western Art *by William C. Foxley (The Museum of Western Art, Denver, 1985; dist. by University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln; 200 pp., color illus., notes, biblio., $90.00).*

The story of the West unfolds in these splendidly reproduced paintings, from Bierstadt's romantic portraits of the towering Rockies to O'Keeffe's abstract *Cow's Skull on Red*. Superlative works by Moran, Russell, Remington, Blumenschein, and many other great artists dedicated to the West trace the transformation of the frontier. Their canvasses range from images of a vast wilderness populated by buffalo and Indians to contemporary renditions depicting the death of the Old West. In this handsome, oversize volume, Foxley provides pithy sketches of the artists and their art.

From Rattlesnakes to Road Agents: Rough Times on the Frio *by Frances Bramlette Farris, ed. by C. L. Sonnichsen (Texas Christian University Press, Fort Worth, 1985; 152 pp., illus., cloth $14.95, paper $7.95).*

Born in 1865, Aunt Fan, as she was known to her friends and relatives, recalls here her experience of growing up in south Texas on the wild frontier. Spirited and plucky, she faced up to Indian attacks, renegade outlaws, the hardship of drought, as well as every little boy she thought she could lick. Packed with yarns about her many mischievous escapades, her charming narrative is also an accurate historical account of the post-Civil War Southwest.

The Sierra Club Guide to the Natural Areas of Colorado and Utah *by John Perry and Jane Greverus Perry (Sierra Club Books, San Francisco, 1985; 336 pp., maps, index, paper $9.95).*

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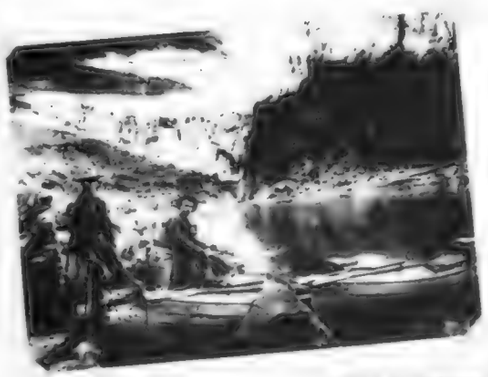

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Daughters of Joy, Sisters of Misery: Prostitutes in the American West, 1865–1890 *by Anne M. Butler (University of Illinois Press, Champaign, 1985; 200 pp., illus., index, notes, biblio., $16.95).*

Butler's thoroughly researched book shows that the harsh reality of the life of a prostitute in the Old West is a far cry from the image of the fun-loving dance hall girl. She paints a drab portrait of women who often encountered poverty, illness, brutality, and society's scorn while following miners' and soldiers' camps. Shed of the romantic trappings that surround the profession, frontier prostitution comes across as a sordid business whose participants earned little money and often had no recourse to the law, family, or friends when mistreated.

With Crook in the Black Hills: Stanley J. Morrow's 1876 Photographic Legacy *by Paul L. Hedren (Pruett Publishing Company, Boulder, Colorado, 1985; 96 pp., illus., index, paper $10.00).*

Frontier photographer Stanley Morrow was in the Black Hills in Dakota Territory taking pictures of the 1876 gold rush when he intercepted General George Crook and his Big Horn and Yellowstone Expedition returning from battles with the Sioux. As Hedren's knowledgeable text explains, the soldiers Morrow portrays are battle-fatigued and hungry, forced as they were to rely on their own mounts for food during their eight-day "Mud," "Horsemeat," and "Starvation" march. Morrow followed Crook and his men through the Dakota Territory, recording detailed scenes of military camp life.

Gold Seeker: Adventures of a Belgian Argonaut during the Gold Rush Years *by Jean-Nicolas Perlot, trans. by Helen Harding Bretnor, ed. and intro. by Howard R. Lamar (Yale University Press, New Haven, Connecticut, 1985; 483 pp., illus., maps, index, $29.95).*

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Desert Passages: Encounters with the American Deserts *by Patricia Nelson Limerick (University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, 1985; biblio., index, notes, cloth $22.50, paper $12.50).*

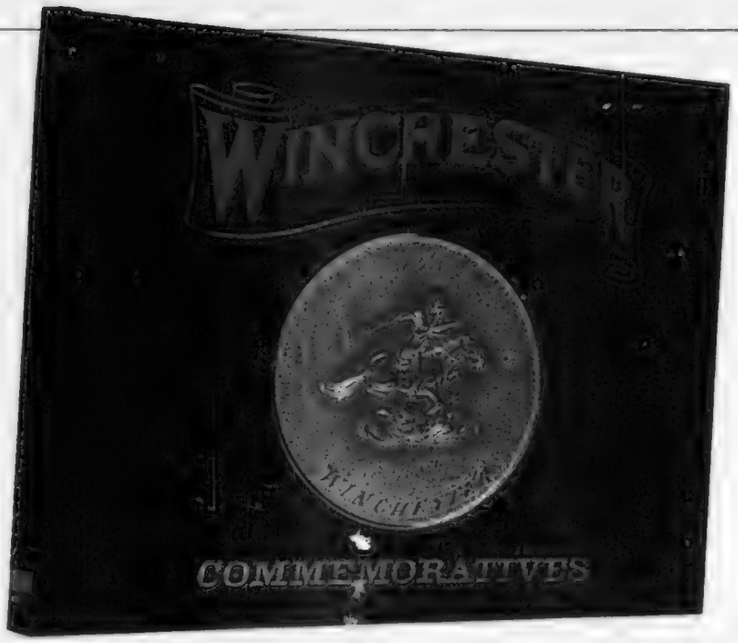
Typical nineteenth century opinions of Western deserts are "horrid charnel house" and "hateful reality." Drawing upon the writings of eight different desert visitors, Limerick traces the change in attitude toward our arid lands from John C. Frémont's revulsion to Edward Abbey's passion for preservation. As Mark Twain observes in this informative and engrossing book, any landscape can become more esthetically pleasing once survival is ensured. Limerick believes that as individuals begin to understand the desert, their desire to transform it lessens.

California Currents: An Exploration of the Ocean's Pleasures, Mysteries, and Dilemmas *by Marie De Santis (Presidio Press, Novato, California, 1985; 248 pp., index, illus., $15.95).*

De Santis's enlightening and amusing essays journey underwater, along the shore, and through the fishing communities of the California coast. We meet marine biologists who express concern about the ocean's inhabitants, and hear a fisherman's salty tales about sailing the seas for sixty years. De Santis's sensitive manner of describing the salmon, seabirds, and myriad other occupants of the ocean's complex environment conveys some of the ocean's magical allure.

The River of the West: The Adventures of Joe Meek, Volume II: The Oregon Years *by Frances Fuller Victor, ed. and intro. by Lee Nash (Mountain Press Publishing Company, Missoula, Montana, 1985; first published in 1870; 382 pp., illus., maps, notes, index, biblio., cloth $24.95, paper $9.95).*

The larger-than-life story of Joe Meek continues in this second volume of his memoirs edited by Victor, a facsimile of the original 1870 edition. In this section Meek has become a prominent Oregon settler, acting as sheriff, U.S. Marshal, and legislator during the mid-1800s. Though Meek sometimes stretched the truth, his tale contains historically valuable depictions of the feats and foibles of the settlers, missionaries, and Indians who populated the Oregon Territory.



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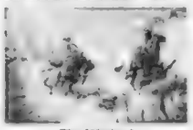

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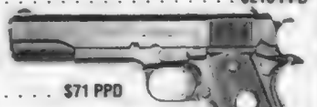

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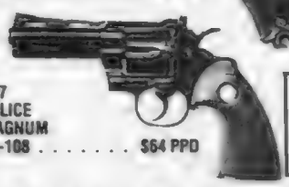

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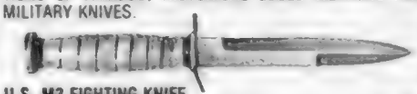

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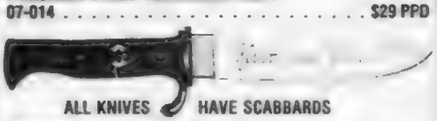

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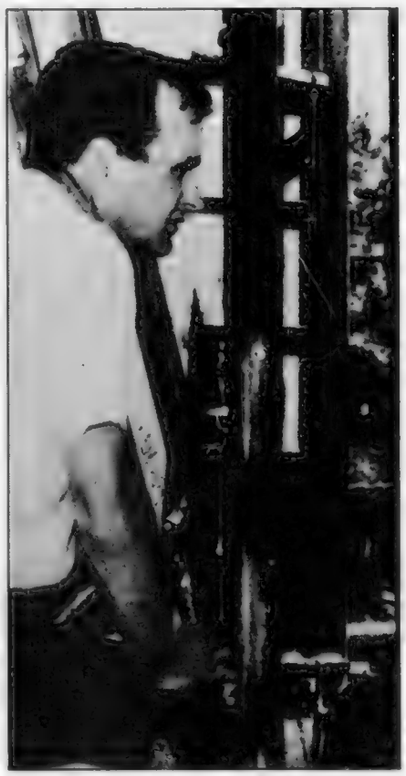

COURTESY GEORGE BUSH

GEORGE BUSH

We invite you to join our celebration of the **Texas Sesquicentennial** in our January/February issue.

Vice-President **George Bush** will reminisce about those days in Texas, a quarter of a century ago, when his concerns were **oil rigs** and hard-hat workers instead of legislation and senators.

Popular writer **A. C. Greene** will spin some tales about his life in the Lone Star state.

With his usual acumen, **L. D. Clark** brings us his views about recent books written about Texas.

Moving from star-country to space, astronomer **Richard Norton** relates the history of that brilliant sky traveler **Halley's Comet** and tells us where to look for it during its visit.

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COURTESY UTAH STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Saltair—Utah's Answer to Coney Island

Ah, sweet memories of the delights of "Saltair."

Two lovely bathing beauties lounge on the sands of Utah's Great Salt Lake around the turn of the century, their modesty assured by voluminous bathing suits and long, black stockings. At hand are paper parasols to ward off the sun from any expanse of fair skin left exposed. For their pleasure, these young ladies of the Lake have come to Saltair, the fabulous amusement park that claimed to be the most popular entertainment spot for Utahans during the first quarter of this century.

The great, domed "Moorish Palace" called Saltair was built in 1893, sponsored by the Mormon church as a place to offer amusements in a wholesome environment. Constructed over pilings in the Lake waters, the giant complex was more than 1,100 feet long, with numerous towers, domes, archways, and trellises creating a pleasure palace that rivaled the attractions of Coney Island. At night, Saltair's reflection in the Lake shimmered with the sparkle of thousands of lights.

Swimming and dancing were the most popular activities at Saltair in its early days. Natives and visitors alike never tired of the amusing freedom that the Great Salt waters allowed swimmers. Saltair's ballroom was touted as the largest in the world, and dancing was so popular that the ballroom opened two months before and closed two months after the regular summer season. Year after year, additional features were added until Saltair offered just about everything one found in amusement parks the country over—from roller coaster and fun house to traveling shows.

Saltair's most glamorous and popular era closed in April of 1925 when fire destroyed the complex. The resort was rebuilt and opened again in 1926, but after a few years, it was beset with continuing problems that made it progressively unprofitable. The most maddening difficulty was the unpredictable fluctuation of the Lake, which one season might provide good swimming at Saltair and the next summer leave the resort high and dry one-half mile from water.

In January of 1959 Saltair's owners donated the complex to the state of Utah. Deserted and uncared-for, Saltair burned to the ground in 1970. A new owner attempted rejuvenation in 1982, but following the exceedingly wet winter of 1983, Saltair was washed by flood waters in the summer of 1984.

Though conquered by fire and water and man's neglect, Saltair lives on in the memory of generations of Utahans who found that it did indeed splendidly fulfill its first purpose—to provide a place of wholesome "escape and pleasure."

Relating the history of Utah's fabulous pleasure resort, *Saltair* by Nancy D. and John S. McCormick was published by the University of Utah Press, Salt Lake City, in 1985. It is profusely illustrated with appealing, nostalgic photographs showing Westerners of another day enjoying life.

AMERICAN WEST offers twenty-five dollars to any reader whose suggestion is accepted for publication in Western Lore. We seek information (with relevant pictures, if possible) about unusual artifacts, unusual and little-known happenings, unusual and little-known people, as well as little-known facts about well-known people—all in Western history. What do you have? Space is limited; so, we have to be selective. We'll take good care of your pictures and return them promptly. Be sure to pack pictures carefully and enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope for their return. Send submissions to AMERICAN WEST, Western Lore, 3033 N. Campbell Avenue, Tucson, Arizona 85719.

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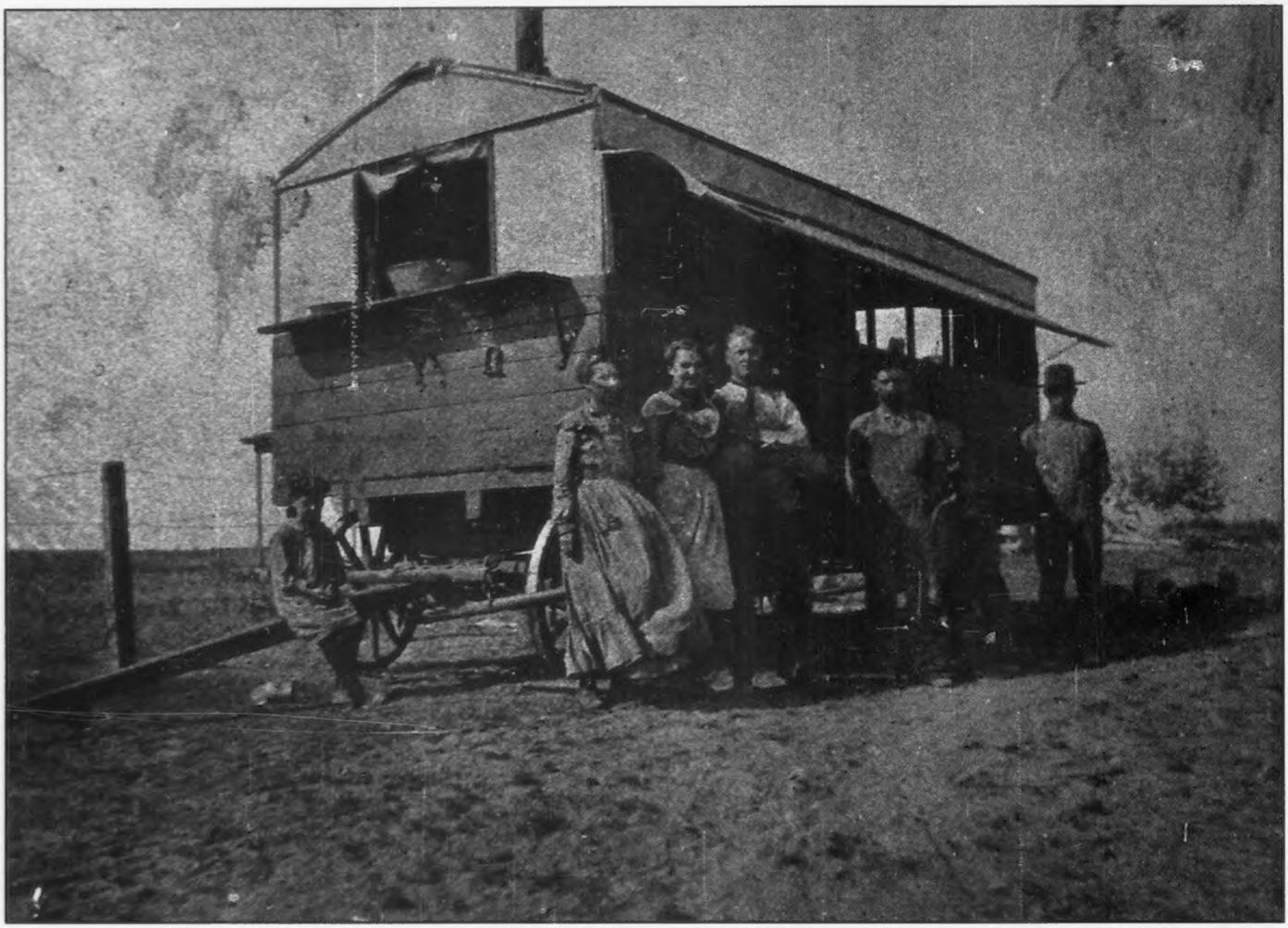
Western Snapshots Yesterday



Posing in front of their traveling cookwagon and home, the Weyrick family and friends take a break from their busy workday in 1904. During summer harvesttime, the Weyricks roamed through the wheat fields of eastern Washington state, husband James helping with the harvest and wife Lois preparing hefty meals that stuck to the ribs of hungry field hands.

James Sylvester Weyrick met and married Canadian-born Lois Arminda Lane in 1892 in Bay City, Michigan. After the tragic death of one of their sons, the Weyricks took their little daughter, Marvel, and their baby boy, Walter, and in 1899 boarded a west-bound train to start a new life.

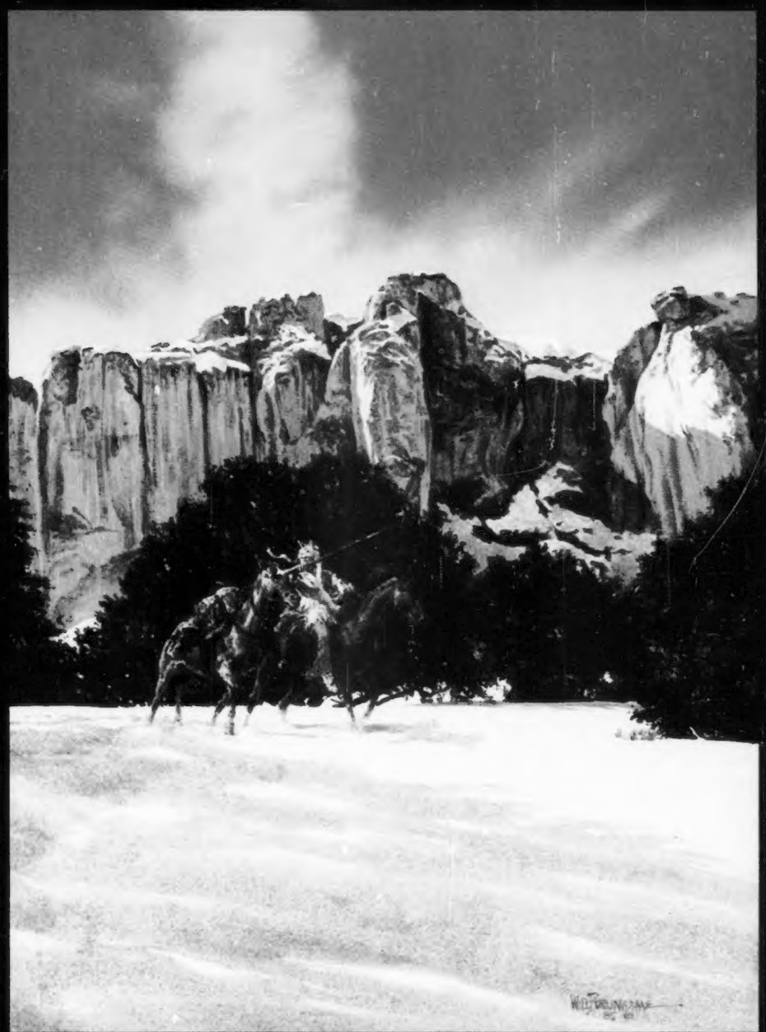
The young family decided on the productive wheat-farming Palouse country in eastern Washington as a good place to homestead. James hired himself out as a farmhand in order to support his wife and two children. Lois pitched in, too, exercising her culinary skills to supplement the family income. She served up hearty stews, skillet biscuits, beans, bacon, and strawberry shortcake, to the delight of the hard-working harvesters.

Nine-year-old Marvel Weyrick, in perky tam-o'-shanter and black stockings, rests on the wagon's tongue in the photograph above. Her mother, Lois, clad in her ruffled "prairie dress," stands just to her left. Wearing bib overalls, James Weyrick is the fourth adult from the left, his young son Walter standing beside him. Old Shep, the family dog, loiters in the shade at the far right. The names of the other people shown are no longer known.

Now ninety years old, Marvel Weyrick Humphrey recalls that sometimes in the summer she and her brother would sleep on the ground, beneath the wagon. At times the children awoke to open sky above them, the wagon having moved on at daybreak to follow the field workers. Since the sounds of wheat-cutting traveled clearly through the quiet countryside, sister and brother had only to scramble over the stubble to rejoin their temporary home on wheels.

Marvel Humphrey's daughter, Eleanor Byers, of Beverly Hills, California, sent us this wonderful reminiscence of long-ago Western summers.

AMERICAN WEST offers twenty-five dollars to any reader whose Western Snapshot Yesterday is accepted for publication on this page. We seek old photographs that tell stories of bygone times. Especially welcome are pictures depicting some forgotten aspect of Western life, serious or amusing. Space is limited; so, we have to be selective. We'll take good care of your pictures and return them promptly. Be sure to pack the snapshots carefully and enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope. Send submissions to AMERICAN WEST, Western Snapshots Yesterday, 3033 N. Campbell Avenue, Tucson, Arizona 85719.



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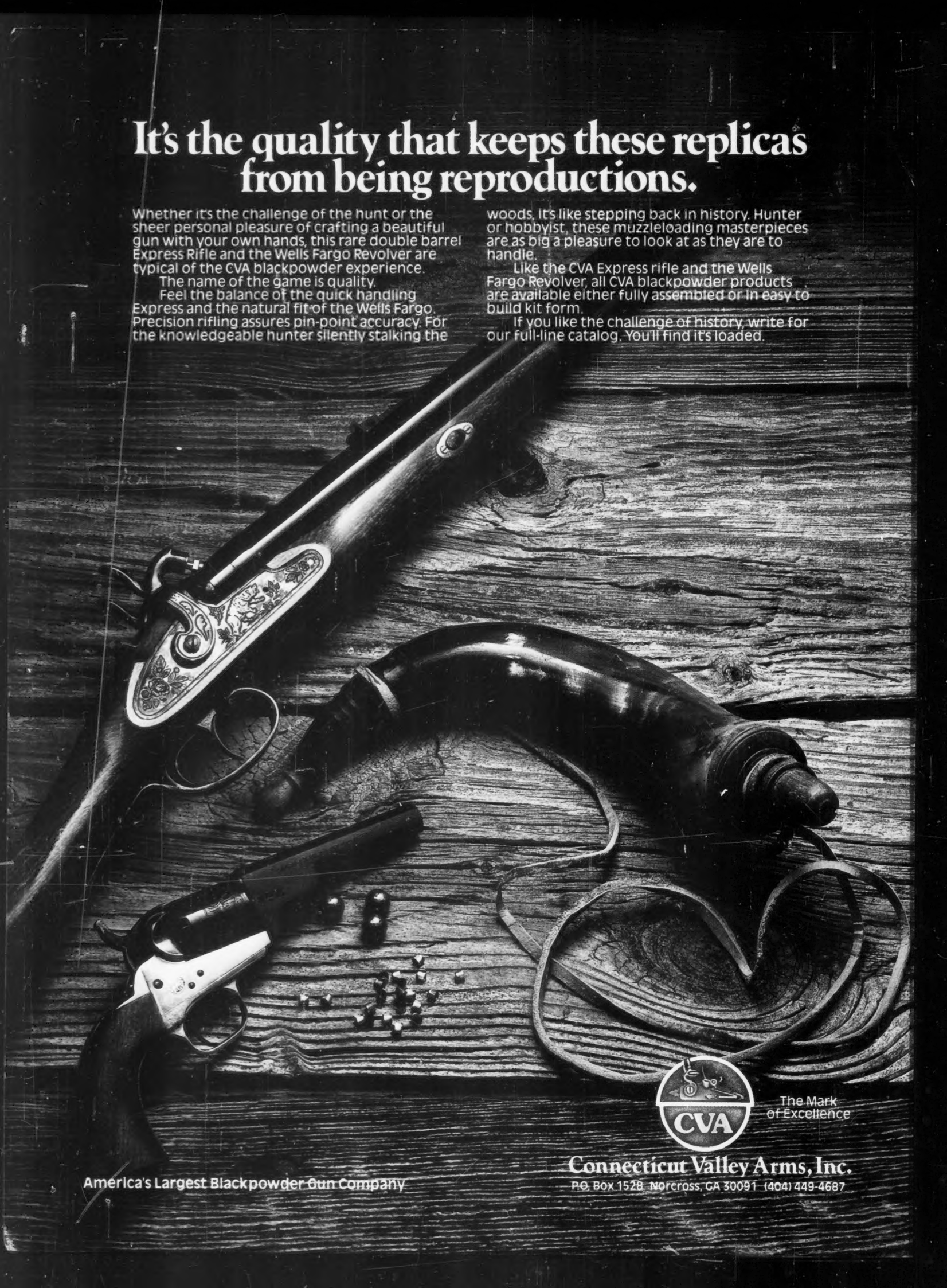

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